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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Ouster of DCCA's Ogumoro sought

By JOEL D. PINAROC
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REPORTER

Employees of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs sent a strongly worded letter to Capital Hill complaining about the leadership of DCCA Secretary Laura T. Ogumoro.

The letter was presented to Lt. Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres by members of the Saipan Seniors Advisory Council, who also had a closed-door meeting with the lieutenant governor on Wednesday.

See OUSTER on Page 4

Li's disappearance now on 3rd week

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» 65-year-old father, wife set to leave last night
» DPS chief says investigation is ongoing

As the mysterious disappearance of Saipan Fresh Market owner Zhi Yuan Li enters its third week, his 65-year-old father and wife were set to leave the CNMI last night.

Department of Public Safety Commissioner James C. Deleon Guerrero said yesterday the investigation into Li's disappearance is still ongoing. He did not elaborate.

Li's brother told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that their father and Li's wife were going back to China last night.

The brother said he does not know when their father is coming back to Saipan.

The father and Li's wife arrived from China a few days after the businessman's disappearance.

A family member also stated that DPS investigators have yet to return Li's white Toyota Ta-

See LI'S on Page 4

'LET'S TALK INCENTIVES'

Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Alex A. Sablan, speaking during the monthly meeting of the group on Wednesday, says the Chamber is willing to sit down with the administration of Gov. Eloy S. Inos to discuss potential incentives, including tax breaks, for private firms willing to hire public sector workers. JOEL D. PINAROC

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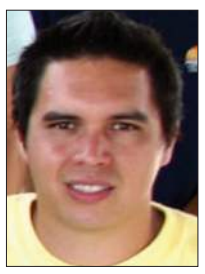

Villagomez

CNMI gets to keep its own shark fin law

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has exempted the Northern Mariana Islands from the federal preemption of the CNMI law that bans the possession, sale, trade, or distribution of shark fins in the CNMI.

In 2013, NOAA proposed implementing regulations for the Shark Conservation Act signed by President Obama in 2011. An outcry followed, as these regulations would have upended state shark fin bans across the nation in places like the CNMI, Guam, Hawaii, California, Oregon, Maryland, and Illinois, among other

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Local

DLNR: CNMI to say no to proposed ESA listing

»'ESA law poses problems for smaller islands overall'

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources is drafting a "position letter" for the governor's signature on the proposed listing of 23 Marianas species under the Endangered Species Act. This letter, according to acting secretary Richard Seman, will represent a "unified front" against the proposed listing as it is now but would recommend that a majority of the species be taken off and separated from the original five candidate species for the ESA.

Seman said they have briefed the governor, the Legislature, and the islands' different mayors on the issue.

Rota holds 11 of the 23 proposed species, and according to Seman, would be the island that is "impacted the most should [the listing] go through."

"The 17 [species] were add-ons that we felt did not provide us sufficient time to fully review and assess those individual species, whether they do warrant listing or not," he told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

But Seman also indicated that the problem might not just lie with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife that proposed the listing, but with the larger framework of the ESA as a law and how its application may not bode well for the smaller islands of the CNMI.

He called the ESA a "once-size-fits-all" kind of legislation.

"We shouldn't be treated the way they protect other species in the [United S]tates—simply because they have larger land areas that can be used to mitigate [impact], whereas here, every little land that [the species] are present is a large land that we are losing."

"To use that type of system here…it overwhelms us," he said.

He believes the ESA should be utilized so species are treated differently on a case-to-case basis.

The Marianas reed warbler is an example of this, he said. According to Seman, the reed warbler is not endangered because of its low number in population, but it is believed to be found only on Saipan.

"Because of its uniqueness, and how it's only found in one place—according to the ESA—it warrants protection. But if you look at the reed warbler it has since adapted to *tangan tangan*, which is not its original habitat. *Tangan tangan* is widespread now," he said.

Because of this, he claimed that over half of projects proposed on island could be slowed down by protections for the reed warbler.

He said there should a different kind of formula on how the CNMI saves or protect the species, he said.

"If USFW Service Ecological program are the people who are facing this kind of situations on a regular basis, I believe they are the ones that can convey this kind of concern to the U.S. Congress for a necessary amendment to the Endangered Species Act. The [ESA] needs to amended to be more responsive to the type of species we are trying to protect," he added.

But when asked about this in a recent interview, USFW deputy supervisor Kristi Young clarified that the Service is not allowed to lobby Congress for an amendment.

"The Fish and Wildlife Service has no ability to push for those things," she said.

She said what their agency has control over are the law's regulations. "Most laws are very vague," she said, "So the agency that is assigned that law writes regulations. So that's where we have authority."

"We have been proposing changes on how we implement critical habitat. We have been proposing the definition of 'adverse modification,' which has a lot do with consultation with federal agencies, and there are other ones in the works that haven't been proposed yet. That's how we…modify how we meet the purposes of the Act through our own work," she said.

Young said since she has been at the Service in 1992 there have been no major changes to the law. Its major changes happened in the '70s, she said.

The last amendment to the ESA, according to the Service website, was in 2004.

The ESA is over 40 years old.

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Co-op hopes to have first general membership meeting this month

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Farmer's Cooperative is still working to get together for its first general membership meeting since it opened the Garapan Public Market in August.

According to co-op secretary Isidoro Cabrera yesterday, once their president Maria "Frica" Pangelinan sets down an agenda they will set a date and proceed with the meeting.

"Hopefully this month," Cabrera said when asked for the date of the meeting. They do not want to wait until March, he said.

Earlier, an election of new board members was reported to be on the agenda for their first meeting, according to co-op officials. It was reported that only Cabrera, treasurer Ignacio Concepcion, and Pangelinan were active in the market.

It was also reported by co-op officials and Pangelinan herself that she may step down as president. She would stay on as consultant, according to Cabrera earlier.

"I can still help and advise. My heart is in this. We just need cooperation," Pangelinan had said.

In related news, Sabalu Market, seen as the public market's competitor, has lost its board president, Calistro Reyes, after he stepped down recently.

To this, Cabrera said yesterday that they would "just wait and see" how things would go with the Sabalu Market. He said it's hard to predict if their new board can work with the co-op but he indicated he was open to it.

He said yesterday that he plans to meet with Sabalu's vice president Manuel Borja today.

BoH not leaving Pago Pago in June

»Decision to withdraw stands, timing not confirmed

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (The Samoa News/PIR)—Bank of Hawaii is not leaving in June, and this was confirmed by American Samoa Branch VP and branch manager for Bank of Hawaii, EJ Tyler Ozu when he appeared before the House Economic Development Committee chaired by Larry Sanitoa last week. An exact departure date was not given by Ozu, saying only that June is abrupt and too soon.

Last month House Speaker Savali Talavou Ale said that Bank of Hawai'i would be leaving at the end of June this year. During the same session, the issue on BoH leaving was brought up when Tualauta faipule, Vui Florence Tuaumu Saulo pointed out that bank's officials should be questioned as to the exact date they are planning to close down for business.

Savali pointed out to the lawmakers that Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga and his administration has worked tirelessly and has turned over every rock, seeking options for BoH to remain in the territory, however it's been unsuccessful.

During the hearing last week Vice Speaker of the House Fetu Fetui Jr told Ozu that for many years the public has worked with BoH and he asked Ozu if there is a possibility for the bank to reconsider.

Ozu explained that anything is possible; however the bank at the onset of their decision to leave went through a thorough and very thoughtful process. He said they wouldn't make a decision in haste to only go back on that decision.

NMHC reduces questioned costs to just $42K

'Military still pushing for Pagan use'

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

Representatives of the Marine Forces Pacific met with Northern Islands Mayor Jerome Aldan last week to discuss matters regarding Pagan.

Aldan, in an email to *Saipan Tribune*, said that nine MarForPac personnel consisting of consultants and a lawyer met with him at his office on Capital Hill on Wednesday.

Aldan

Aldan said he decided to sit and listen to the delegation to get updates and see whether things have changed on MarForPac's perspective on Pagan.

MarForPac met with Aldan earlier last month, proposing to combine live fire and maneuver training on Pagan at the volcano side of the island.

Last week, MarForPac mentioned that they have shrunk and minimized the "area of high impact target," focusing solely on the volcano area and with minimal impact on the surroundings.

"The fact remains that they are still pushing forward to take Pagan for live firing and bombing, which is a no-go, at least as far as my take on the issue is concerned," Aldan said.

"Nothing much has changed since the beginning and the island is still being aimed for live fire and live bombs as proposed," he added.

He said the military's proposal has not or would never discourage him from proceeding with his own plans as well.

"NIMO will continue to push for the resettlement and redevelopment of Pagan and the rest of the Northern Islands. These islands belong to the Northern Marianas descent and not just those that resided on Pagan, so the entire CNMI should be just as concerned as we are," he said.

MarForPac had also proposed coexisting with the Northern Islands people on its resettlement once the homestead program pushes through. Aldan claims the program is still being held up by the Department of Public Lands due to infrastructure issues.

Aldan said it is time for people to realize their resources and begin deciding what is best for the people and not just rely on real estate type of approaches.

"I believe in our people and can say that we have become more intelligent and sound minded when issues and concerns are reflected in our lives. What is in the best interest of the military may not be in our best interest," he said.

"After all, these lands are our lands and negotiation whether to move with it or deny it is in our hands. That's more reason why the CNMI government and not just the NIMO should be in line with each other on the military issue," he added.

Man arrested for violating TRO

Police arrested a man who, despite a temporary restraining order prohibiting him from having any contact with his former girlfriend, went to her house in Koblerville and asked for a share of their son's food stamp on Tuesday morning.

Sheldon U. Remoket, 28, was taken to Superior Court yesterday for allegedly violating Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo's order of protection.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho imposed a $1,000 cash bail and set the preliminary hearing for Feb. 11 at 9am.

Police detective Vincent A. Igisaiar stated in his report that the Department of Public Safety Central received a call about a contempt of court incident at a residence in Koblerville on Tuesday.

When a police officer arrived at the residence at 9:03am, the alleged victim told the officer that she has a TRO issued by Govendo against Remoket.

The victim alleged that Remoket arrived at her home and inquired about his share of their son's food stamp. She refused to surrender the food stamp and told him to leave.

She then asked Remoket about their son's child support, which the court ordered him to pay. Instead of giving her money, Remoket gave her food stamp but she refused it. She told him to leave and when he left, she called the police for assistance.

A responding police officer later spotted Remoket who was inside a car parked outside Kang Da Market near the Nutrition Assistance Program Office. Police arrested him.

In August 2012, police arrested Remoket, who was allegedly one of two persons who broke into a storage room of a house in San Antonio and stole an amplifier, chrome steering wheel, and a bag.

In August 2008, Remoket and two other men were arrested in connection with 13 cases of burglary and theft cases on Capital Hill, in As Gonno, Papago, and Kagman.

In November 2006, Remoket was arrested after he allegedly beat up a co-suspect in a theft case. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. has managed to reduce a total of $1.55 million in questioned costs from their books due to the efforts of management, according to NMHC corporate director Jesse Palacios.

Citing NMHC's audit accomplishments in their 2014 annual report, Palacios said that questioned costs totaled $581,388 in fiscal year 2010. This went down to $215,907 in fiscal year 2011, then to $144,006 in fiscal year 2012, and further down to only five digits, about $42,216, in fiscal year 2013.

Questioned costs are costs or expenses that are questioned by the Office of the Public Auditor for potential violation of a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement or document governing the expenditure of funds.

A finding at the time of an audit may also results in a questioned cost if it is not supported by adequate documentation and the expenditure of funds for its intended purpose is unnecessary or unreasonable.

According to OPA's audit report for NMHC, about $42,216 in questioned costs remain for fiscal year 2013, mostly from NMHC's Section 8 assistance programs through HUD.

"Last year brought about many challenges but the agency's accomplishments were overcoming such challenges. First off, as the board repeatedly reminded NMHC, the audit is our report card to the world. The federal agencies, businesses, and the community look at the audit report to determine the stability and viability of NMHC," Palacios said.

He said the reduction in questioned costs is a direct result of their management's concerted effort, actively monitoring staff work performance, and strict adherence to program compliance.

"For fiscal year 2014, the audit is still ongoing so we anticipate the final product to be completed sometime in March; however, OPA will give a draft this February," Palacios said.

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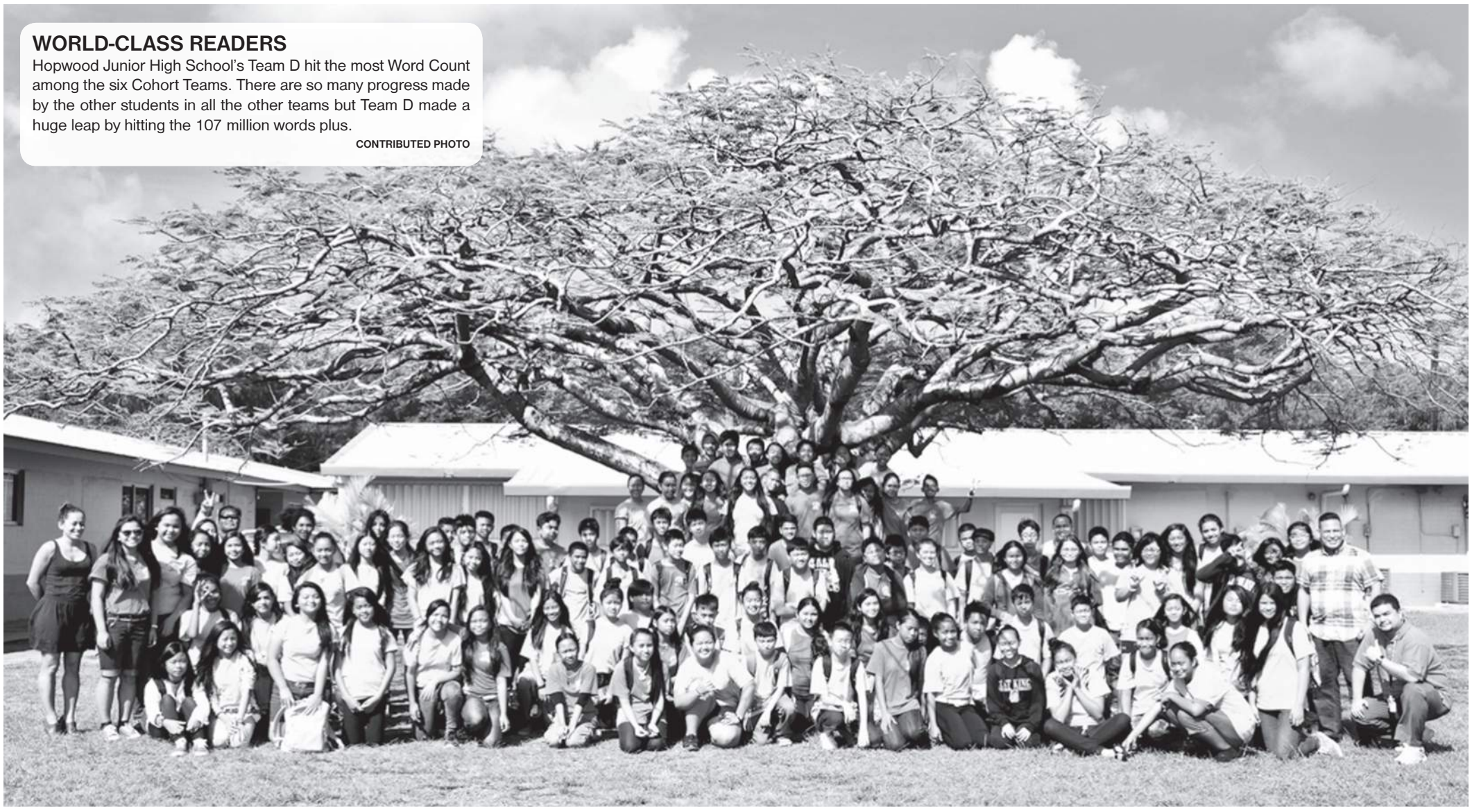

WORLD-CLASS READERS
Hopwood Junior High School's Team D hit the most Word Count among the six Cohort Teams. There are so many progress made by the other students in all the other teams but Team D made a huge leap by hitting the 107 million words plus.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bordallo is reappointed Ranking Member of Readiness Subcommittee

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo has been reappointed the Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness. As the Ranking Member, Bordallo is the senior Democrat of the Readiness Subcommittee, which has broad oversight of issues important to the Asia-Pacific rebalance and Marine realignment to Guam. She was also appointed to the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces.

The Subcommittee on Readiness is responsible for the single largest account within DOD's budget. It oversees military readiness, training, logistics and maintenance issues and programs, military construction, installations and family housing issues, and the BRAC process. It also oversees civilian personnel, energy security, and environmental issues that affect DOD. The Readiness Subcommittee makes sure that our troops are properly trained and their equipment is properly maintained so they can succeed in their missions, and that they have the facilities and services they deserve when they return home.

The Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee has oversight over the Navy and Marine Corps programs. Through its authorization for Navy and Marine Corps procurement and R&D programs, this subcommittee is committed to reversing the decline in the Navy battle force fleet, strengthening the naval air component, and providing the Marine Corps warfighter with essential equipment for combat operations.

"The Readiness Subcommittee oversees many issues important to our community, including military construction, family housing, base closures, and realignments and related energy and environmental issues," said Bordallo. "I am pleased that I will continue to serve as the panel's Ranking Member, and I thank my Democratic colleagues on HASC for their continued confidence in me. During the 113th Congress, we made progress on many issues that ensure that our military is well equipped to carry out their mission, and I am looking forward to continuing our bipartisan work during the 114th Congress.

"We also made significant progress to move the build-up forward, including removing the remaining restriction on using Government of Japan funds for the Marine realignment to Guam. I appreciate the positive working relationship I have had with Readiness Chairman Rob Wittman, and I look forward to serving with him on the Subcommittee." ***(PR)***

OUSTER
From Page 1

Members of the council support employees of DCCA, said council president Maria Salinas in an interview.

"We are very displeased with her management," Salinas said, adding that they are "asking that the secretary not be retained" and be replaced with someone "who is more sensible."

Salinas said there are also "a lot of complaints from the [Division of Youth Services]."

Like DYS, the Office on Aging, where the Saipan Seniors Advisory Council belongs to, is under the umbrella of DCCA.

Regarding the meeting with Torres, Salinas said the lieutenant governor would also like to hear the side of Ogumoro.

The DCCA letter detailed allegations against Ogumoro, citing "the detrimental risk of continued leadership."

The letter said there has been a "great hindrance in the function of the department and deprivation of human services to the people, families, community and deteriorating collaborative inter-department and extended professional connections and significantly, the damaging management of human resources in the department."

Among the many complaints, the letter claimed that several "annual, highly beneficial programs, and critical services" were discontinued, under the current leadership.

On top of the list of canceled events is the Annual Energy Fair for 2014, under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, the letter said.

The letter also claimed that there have been many "department dysfunctions" such as extreme micromanagement, which resulted in "clogging and disabling operations."

The letter further alleged that the DCCA chief had instructed division directors "which vendors to go and not to go to in procuring goods and services disregarding cost-efficient purchases."

According to the letter, there is also poor department accounting under the current leadership, and that division account and funds have been used without the concurrence of the division head.

The letter also claimed that the DCCA chief failed to properly address incidents involving employees, such as a sexual harassment, and often acted "unprincipled and unprofessionally."

The DCCA chief also threatened and taunted employees with her authority, the letter alleged.

Lastly, the letter claimed that it did not contain the names of DCCA employees because the DCCA chief might retaliate.

"We are most certain that Secretary Ogumoro will retaliate immediately if employees' names are revealed but we assure you that there are numerous employees that stand in solidarity in seeking for change and improved leadership."

LI'S
From Page 1

coma to the family.

Li, 43, was reportedly last seen on Jan. 17 at 11am, seeing a friend at an "accounting office" near a tire shop in Puerto Rico. His family reported his disappearance to police that day at 7:56pm.

The following morning, police recovered Li's Toyota Tacoma pickup truck abandoned at a dirt road located between Ladder Beach and Obyan Beach.

Li's other brother refused to comment yesterday, saying the Federal Bureau of Investigation has already been looking into the matter.

A family member reminded the public about their offer of $50,000 cash reward to anyone who can provide information leading to the location of Li—whether he's still alive or already dead.

SHARK FIN
From Page 1

states.

According to then acting secretary of the Department of Land and Natural Resources Manny Pangelinan in a letter to NOAA in December, there was "no basis for preemption of our anti-shark finning law," as it was consistent with existing federal conservation law and would not undermine or impact federally managed fisheries in the CNMI as there are none in or near CNMI waters.

NOAA agreed, in a letter to Pangelinan from NOAA assistant administrator for fisheries Eileen Sobeck that same month.

The decision was announced in January and follows the exemptions of other states with similar laws.

Only Guam and Hawaii remain to be exempted.

Over 180,000 comments were submitted against the proposed rule by activists, U.S. and state congressmen, governors, secretaries of natural resource agencies, and students as well, among others.

"We are so pleased that the United States federal government has respected local law and sharks will remain protected in the CNMI. There is presently no shark fishery in the CMNI and its citizens have clearly demonstrated that they want to conserve sharks in their waters. We applaud NOAA for preserving this state law that protects imperiled shark species," said Pew Charitable Trusts' Angelo Villagomez in a statement.

Sought for more comment, he said Pew remains "hopeful that the federal government will do the right thing and uphold" state law in Hawaii and Guam.

He called it a "great thing" the CNMI was exempted. The law was drafted with local input, he said.

That a national conservation law would upend local conservation law is "part of the irony" of the situation, he told *Saipan Tribune.*

"The U.S. as a nation was in a danger of losing its leadership role in shark conservation if this had been implemented," he said.

'Chamber will work with govt on tax incentives'

By JOEL D. PINAROC
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REPORTER

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is willing to sit down with the administration of Gov. Eloy S. Inos to discuss potential incentives, including tax breaks, for private firms willing to hire public sector workers.

Chamber president Alex A. Sablan, speaking during the monthly meeting of the group on Wednesday, said the Chamber's board of directors "looks forward to working with the Inos/Torres administration to effectively move progressive ideas forward to enhance our economy and livelihood for all that call the CNMI home."

He added that the administration "has some great ideas as well, more specifically with regard to pursuing a transition of public sector workers into the private sector."

"Some of the initial ideas such as tax credits or rebates for businesses to help defray the costs of this transition are noteworthy and we look forward to continuing this dialogue to develop a viable program that makes sense for all concerned."

In an earlier interview, Lt. Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres mentioned that the government is looking at incentives, such as tax breaks, to be given to private firms that will hire government workers.

Torres said the government "encourages the transition to a more diversified labor force through the assistance of the CNMI tax structure."

Torres, in a speech at the Chamber meeting, said he continues to encourage investments to come to the Commonwealth.

"The recent years have seen the CNMI Legislature remove long-held restrictions to viable business ventures, allowing the seeds of entrepreneurship to find new fertile ground in the CNMI."

The official cited upcoming investments in the Commonwealth, including one "that is larger than any we have ever seen in the CNMI and unleashed because your government decided not to prevent the spirit of entrepreneurship from achieving its potential," referring to the entry of casino proponent Best Sunshine International Ltd.

Thespian judges wanted

There is an International Thespian Society competition this Friday and Saturday, Feb. 6, and 7, at the Northern Marianas International School located in the Marianas Business Plaza, Judge reporting time is Friday at 6:30pm, Saturday at 8:30am and 1:30pm.

On Saturday morning, students in grades 9 to 12 will be performing monologues, duet acting, solo musical theatre, and group musical theatre; in the afternoon, grades 6 to 8 students will be performing monologues, duet acting, solo musical theatre.

On Friday night, students in grades 9 to 12 will demonstrate their technical theatre talents in costume design, set design, and theatre marketing and short film.

Judges are badly needed for these events. If you feel you can lend your talents to help evaluate their talents, contact thespians@hotmail.com and you will be sent the Judging Rubrics. ***(PR)***

Ex-convict gets 32-month prison term for hitting an elderly man

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

An ex-convict who hit an elderly man with a PVC pipe and a metal drum cover in the face and head was sentenced yesterday to 32 months in prison.

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman sentenced 28-year-old Matt Souneng to four years in prison, all suspended except for 32 months, for assault with a dangerous weapon.

Souneng was given credit for two months of time served. He will start serving his sentence on Monday.

After completing the prison term, Souneng will be placed on two years probation. He was ordered to pay $1,949.55 in restitution to the victim, Danny Kol, and submit to an evaluation by the Community Guidance Center for anger management counseling and alcohol and drug assessment and treatment.

Souneng is prohibited from possessing or consuming alcohol during his probation.

Wiseman said drinking alcohol is not an excuse to commit crimes yet Souneng has a prior conviction of disturbing the peace arising from a similar incident.

The Office of the Attorney General had charged Souneng with assault with a dangerous weapon, aggravated assault and battery, two counts of assault and battery, and one count of resisting arrest.

Souneng pleaded guilty to assault with a dangerous weapon in July 2014 as part of a plea deal. The remaining charges were dropped.

In the attack that occurred on Nov. 24, 2013, on Saipan, Souneng hit Kol with a metal drum cover, causing a two-inch laceration on the victim's head that required 10 to 12 stitches.

Assistant attorney general Heather Barcinas had recommended a sentence of four years in prison, to be served day for day. She said this would make Souneng truly understand the seriousness of his crime and deter him from committing future crimes.

Assistant public defender Eden Schwartz, counsel for Souneng, recommended a sentence of 18 months in prison with two months' probation.

Schwartz said Soeneng is non-violent unless he is drinking. She said a long probationary term will give Souneng the support he needs to enforce the lesson he learns from having to serve 18 months in prison.

Schwartz said Soeneng drank to the point of blacking out and that he has very little memory of what happened.

In July 2013, the drunk Souneng reportedly threw a rock and stick at a customer of a laundry shop in Koblerville. The victim was limping due to a bruise on the left thigh when police officers arrived at the scene. Souneng pleaded guilty to disturbing the peace in that case and served 83 days in prison.

US, CNMI agree to extend deadline for funding requirement for CUC projects

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. government and the CNMI government have agreed to extend the deadline for the CNMI to comply with the $2.8-million funding requirement for some Commonwealth Utilities Corp. projects.

Under a settlement agreement between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, CUC, and the CNMI government, the CNMI must deposit $2.8 million into the U.S. District Court's registry or file a notice with the court of the Department of the Interior's authorization to proceed for funding Stipulated Order 2 projects by Feb. 1, 2015.

SO2 refers to court-mandated projects that include the CUC pipeline; tank erection cleanout and testing; secondary containment; and used oil disposal, among others.

In their stipulation filed in court on Sunday, the parties asked the court to approve their request to extend the deadline to Feb. 13, 2015.

The parties, through their respective lawyers, stated that the U.S. government, including EPA and DOI's Office of Insular Affairs, the CNMI, and CUC, along with the Engineering and Environmental Management Company, have been working cooperatively and meeting regularly to obtain an authorization to proceed from DOI to devote $2.8 million to SO2 projects.

The lawyers said despite the parties' diligent efforts, the CNMI will not be able to obtain an authorization to proceed by the Feb. 1 deadline.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
MUNICIPALITY OF SAIPAN/SERPEL
UNITED STATES NOV. 4, 1986

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Office of the Mayor of Saipan, Dog Control Program Will Conduct a Scheduled Village-to-Village Stray Dog Removal and is Seeking Cooperation from the Community

In an effort to significantly reduce the stray dog population in each village, beginning Monday, February 9, 2015, the Office of the Mayor of Saipan, Dog Control Program will be conducting a village-to-village stray dog removal campaign dubbed "Zero Strays in our Village".

The Office of the Mayor of Saipan encourages dog owners to comply with the Saipan Dog Control Rules and Regulations, e.g., dogs must be securely leashed; dogs must be securely confined in an enclosed lot or premises; all dogs over 4 months of age must be registered.

Villages	From	To
Dandan/Garapan	February 9	February 20, 2015
Koblerville/China Town	February 23	March 6, 2015
San Antonio/Navy Hill	March 9	March 20, 2015
Chalan Kanoa/Puerto Rico	March 23	April 3, 2015
Susupe/Tanapag	April 6	April 17, 2015
San Jose/San Roque	April 20	May 1, 2015
Chalan Kiya/As Matuis	May 4	May 15, 2015

Remaining village schedules will be posted.

For more information, please contact the Office of the Mayor of Saipan Dog Control Program at 234-6208 or 898-4743 or email us at saipanmayorsoffice@gmail.com

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

Tel. (670) 234-6866/234-9447/234-7689/234-7670 - Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp

AMENDED NOTICE

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2015

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an estimated $1,240,460.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of $868,915.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $309,294.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, $62,251.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2015.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention and rapid re-housing activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning January 06, 2015.

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by Monday, April 06, 2015, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after April 06, 2015, will not be accepted.

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows: February 18, 2015, 5:00 p.m. & February 25, 2015, 5:00 p.m.

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in Songsong Village.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Planning Assistant at 234-6866 or 234-7689.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS

CUC-IFB-15-011

AGINGAN WWTP TRANSFORMER REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the replacement of Agingan WWTP transformer in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general of removal of existing transformer, installation and connection of new three-phase pad-mounted compartmental transformer with accessories and components to riser pole, installation of bollards and other related work. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **210 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The Project is funded by a grant from the United Stated of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project in contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, wire transfer or credit card in the amount of $200.00 for one IFB package set

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **February 18, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-15-011, Agingan WWTP Transformer Replacement Project"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 12, 2015,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. *A Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract may be contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) approval. If CPUC approval is required, the contract will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 20, 2015** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Manager, Procurement & Supply via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Ms. Birhen Martinez, Water/Wastewater Engineer via email address birhen.martinez@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Manager, Procurement & Supply

Universal Group's defunct store lost $250K in cash during 2005 burglary

»Biggest heist in CNMI in many years

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Universal Group Development Inc. (Saipan), a company that is suing a bank and its former president for allegedly blocking the firm from gaining access to $225,000 of its own funds from a business savings account, used to run a store that was burglarized and some $250,000 in cash was stolen.

According to police records, the now defunct Hailan Store located along Chalan Pale Arnold in Chalan Lau Lau was burglarized and the cash representing the store's cash collections for the past three days was stolen in July 2005.

The cash was reportedly in the store's safe.

Police said the store was equipped with surveillance cameras but the equipment's wires had been cut.

It was Wang Fen Fu, a store control clerk, who discovered the money missing from the safe when he went inside his office to validate cash collections.

The incident was reportedly the biggest heist in the CNMI in many years.

The Department of Public Safety's Thief Apprehension Select Coalition led the investigation into the burglary but the case remains unsolved.

Aside from Hailan Market, Universal Group also used to operate the now defunct Oriental Dumpling Restaurant in Chalan Lau Lau.

Universal Group, through counsel Samuel Mok, is suing its former president and shareholder, Wangzhong Yu, for conversion and the First Hawaiian Bank for breach of contract.

Mok disclosed that Yu was arrested in China when he traveled to that country in 2013 for embezzlement and theft, among other charges.

Yu, however, maintains that he is still president of Universal Group and that he was detained in China for 22 months, under conditions amounting to torture, caused by political influence exerted by his former business partners.

Saying it is a mere stakeholder, First Hawaiian Bank has asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to allow it to deposit with the clerk of court $224,558.71 in a savings account that is being disputed by Universal Group's shareholders.

In its cross-claim, the bank named as cross-defendants Yu, Mingnan Jin, and Jinwei Guo.

Jin and Guo are claiming that they are the officers and directors of Universal Group, and that Guo is now the sole shareholder.

Second day of pandemic exercises today

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune
REPORTER

Due to logistical errors the four-day pandemic exercise will reconvene today, Thursday, according to Tara Brown, project officer of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-Division of State and Local Readiness-Office of Public Health and Preparedness and Response.

The four-day pandemic exercise, called Strategic National Stockpile/Receiving Staging Storing/Medical Countermeasures Pandemic Influenza Full Scale Exercise, intends to test the CNMI's response capabilities in the event of a pandemic outbreak.

Brown disclosed that a small technical issue did happen during the first day of the exercise. However, she said that in the event things go wrong in an exercise, stakeholders should fill gaps that need to be addressed.

"You want things to go wrong so you can identify your gaps and weak areas. I think what originally started the processes is that the person that had been identified to be the logistics was out sick but that is a good thing because in the event of a pandemic, you are talking of flu and infectious diseases and people won't be able to work," Brown said.

"That is where you really advocate to train your staff and so if someone is out sick, unavailable, or can't get to the office, there is always somebody in the office that is trained," she added.

Despite the small errors and gaps identified, it didn't stop the training from continuing. Warren F. Villagomez, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. Public Health-Hospital Emergency Preparedness Program director, said they made some changes to accommodate the change of schedule to today.

He said this is the first time for an SNS exercise to be conducted on the island.

"I would not say that there are major issues but that is one reason that we're reengaging in a discussion base to make sure that response efforts is coordinated among players," he said.

Although small errors showed up, the various organizations involved did manage to figure out how to get medical supplies to Rota and Tinian. It will be distributed through air, charter, regular carrier, Department of Public Safety-Boating Safety, and Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

Organizations that are taking part in the exercise include CHCC's PHEPP, Medical Supply Office, HAZMAT responders, maintenance/facility, finance division, Department of Public Lands and its various divisions; Customs and Border Protection, CNMI Customs, DPS (Saipan, Tinian, and Rota), Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Northern Marianas College, Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, TakeCare FHP, Rota Health Center, Tinian Health Center, St. Jude Renal Dialysis, Pacific jurisdictions (Hawaii, Guam, and Republic of Marshall Islands), U.S. Marshal, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan Health Clinic, Priority Care, and Medical Associates of the Pacific.

Notice of Zoning Board Meeting

The regular meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, February 12, 2015 at 5:00 PM, Zoning Board Conference Room, Saipan
(Tel: 234-9661 • Fax: 234-9666 • e-mail: www.zoning.gov.mp)

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of January 8, 2015 minutes
5. Public Comments
(not related to files for discussion under item B. Public Hearings)

B. Public Hearings.
1. **Conditional Use Application #2015-0326:** Unicorn Corporation is proposing to manufacture and retail concrete hollow blocks. This use is classified as "Manufacturing and Processing" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This area is identified as lot 030 B 21 in Tanapag village, and is zoned as Mixed Commercial.
2. **Conditional Use Application #2014-4028:** Saipan International Real Estate Development Corp. dba: Ocean Vista Resort is proposing to operate a hotel with villas and residential uses. This use is classified as a "Planned Development" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This proposal will be situated on lots H 328-4, H -328-1, and TR 21698 on Capital Hill along Isa Drive. These areas are zoned as Rural.

C. Communications/ Reports
D. Old Business.
1. None
E. New Business
1. Office Operations Report (Permit and Enforcement)
2. Review and Adoption of revised Zoning Fees

E. Executive (Closed) Session.

G. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Administrator, Therese T. Ogumoro, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Zoning Board Chairman

MVA: Russian travelers hit hard by economic crisis

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Russia's economic crisis has made travel to the CNMI 80 percent more expensive than just three months ago, according to Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio, but he also noted that MVA Russia is working closely with Asiana Airlines for discounts to the CNMI via Seoul, among other things, at this time.

Tenorio said Russia's economy is currently in crisis as a result of the tensions in Ukraine and the resultant economic sanctions by the United States and the European Union.

Tenorio

These sanctions have led to rapidly rising consumer prices in Russia and has severely eroded consumer confidence, which has impacted outbound travel from the entire nation, he said.

"Coupled with a significant fall in world oil prices which has dramatically reduced Russia's foreign exchange revenues, the Russian ruble has lost 80 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar since just October, making travel to the CNMI and other dollar-denominated destinations effectively 80 percent more expensive for Russians than it was just three months ago," he told *Saipan Tribune.*

He said the economic upheaval has naturally had a massive impact on Russia's travel market, and all destinations and not just the CNMI have experienced sharp decreases in the number of Russian tourists.

"Many charter flight programs such as those operated by Aviacharter to the CNMI have been suspended due to low demand. As a result, the key is that the CNMI is no less attractive as a world-class resort destination for Russians, particularly in the east of the country, but that the current economic situation is preventing Russians from traveling overseas as they did just six months ago."

"As soon as Russia's economy begins to stabilize in 2015, MVA fully expects the numbers of Russian visitors to start to increase once again, in tandem with economic stability," he said.

According to Tenorio, the MVA Russia team is working closely with Asiana Airlines to provide discounts for air tickets to the CNMI via Seoul, and launching joint CNMI promotions with Asiana throughout the East Russia market.

He said MVA Russia is also continually working with major travel agents to lay the groundwork for the relaunch of charter flights to the CNMI from East Russia once Russia's economy has stabilized.

High surf until 5pm today

A large north-northwest swell produced by strong winds associated with a shear line will continue to cause hazardous surf in the region, according to the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management, citing data from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam.

A high surf advisory remains in effect until 5pm today, Thursday.

Hazardous surf of 8 to 11 feet along north facing shores and 7 to 9 feet along west facing shores will persist through today. Hazardous surf should begin to slowly subside late today.

A small craft advisory is in effect through Thursday afternoon.

Fresh trade winds and combined seas of 8 to 11 feet will produce conditions hazardous for operators of small craft through today. Winds and seas should gradually subside starting tonight but then pick up again over the weekend.

The public, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid boating in these conditions. If travel by boat is necessary, exercise caution especially near reef lines and when entering or leaving harbors and inlets. Do not venture near exposed reefs and beaches especially those along north and west facing reefs as rip currents will be life threatening. ***(HSEM)***

3 Saipan beaches red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has red-flagged the Obyan Beach, Unai Dankulo, and Jeffery's Beach on Saipan and is advising the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

Samples collected from these locations contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

DEQ analyzes water samples collected from Saipan's recreational beaches and storm drainage every Tuesday. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Worldwide Marriage Day on Feb. 8

World Marriage Day honors husband and wife as head of the family, the basic unit of society. It salutes the beauty of their faithfulness, sacrifice and joy in daily married life. World Marriage Day is held each year on the second Sunday in February; for this year World Marriage Day is on Feb. 8, 2015. We invite all married couples to join your Parish Priest and Church Pastor in celebrating this year's World Marriage Day.

The CNMI Worldwide Marriage Encounter community would like to offer loving ideas on spending some quality time with your spouse and family.

1) Have you hugged your spouse today?

2) Call your spouse right now and say "I love you."

3) Take out your wedding pictures tonight and share a memory with family and friends.

4) Show the family movies tonight to celebrate a marriage well done.

5) Bring a gift tonight to your spouse.

6) Fix his or her favorite meal tonight.

7) Share your love for each other with your children tonight.

8) Ask your spouse for a date night.

9) Tell each other how much your marriage means to you.

10) Your marriage relationship is the most intimate relationship possible on earth. Be proud of it and the joys and sacrifices that have made it strong.

11) Reach out—not long distance—and touch your spouse.

12) Share your love story with your children tonight.

World Marriage Day held each year honors the lifelong commitment of husband and wife. World Marriage Day events provide the visible sign of support couples need to continue to make the daily decision to love one another.

For more about CNMI Worldwide Marriage Encounter, contact CNMI Area Ecclesial Team: Fr. Ike Ayuyu at 256-4568 or Charles & Cathy Cepeda at 483-7000 or through email ikeayuyu@gmail.com and csablancepeda@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP NO.: RFP15-COTA/FTA-034
SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 04, 2015 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PREPARATION, DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF THE 2014 ANNUAL REPORT FOR COTA, A PROJECT UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY"

The Scope of Work for this project will be available on or after **February 05, 2015** at the COTA Office, 2nd Floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building located in Capitol Hill, Saipan during regular working hours.

Questions regarding this RFP is due no later than the **close of business, February 23, 2015** and should be addressed to **Ms. Alfreda P. Camacho** by e-mail to **alfreda.camacho@gov.mp**. All responses to questions shall be shared with all prospective proposers.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals; in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Government.

/s/ VINCE MERFALEN
Acting Special Assistant For Public Transportation

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPY • CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: ITB15-DPS-035

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2015 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.
E-BID SUBMISSION TO: procurement@pticom.com
IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED ON THIS ITB.

"PURCHASE OF TWELVE (12) SETS OF DELL WYSE THIN CLIENT ALL-IN-ONE COMPUTER WORKSTATIONS AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES C. DELEON GUERRERO
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
for
Ocean Vista Resort

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Saipan International Real Estate Development Corp. dba: Ocean Vista Resort is proposing to operate a hotel with villas and residential uses. This use is classified as a "Planned Development" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This proposal will be situated on lots H 328-4, H -328-1, and TR 21698 on Capital Hill along Isa Drive. These areas are zoned as Rural.

Date: February 12, 2015, Thursday
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Zoning Board Conference Room, 2nd flr, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan

The above application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on the project may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments shall be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan no later than 4:30pm, February 11, 2015. Written comments may also be submitted via email to therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp , via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Saipan Zoning Law of 2013).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
for
Unicorn Corporation

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Unicorn Corporation is proposing to manufacture and retail concrete hollow blocks. This use is classified as "Manufacturing and Processing" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This area is identified as lot 030 B 21 in Tanapag village, and is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

Date: February 12, 2015, Thursday
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Zoning Board Conference Room, 2nd flr, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan

The above application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on the project may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments shall be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan no later than 4:30pm, February 11, 2015. Written comments may also be submitted via email to therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp , via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Saipan Zoning Law of 2013).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

Notice of Zoning Board Meeting

The regular meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, February 12, 2015 at 5:00 PM, Zoning Board Conference Room, Saipan
(Tel: 234-9661 • Fax: 234-9666 • e-mail: www.zoning.gov.mp)

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of January 8, 2015 minutes
5. Public Comments (not related to files for discussion under item B. Public Hearings)

B. Public Hearings.
1. **Conditional Use Application #2014-3151:** The Honest Profit International Limited (HPIL) has submitted a request with justification to amend the total number of parking spaces for its development as required in Article 9 of the Saipan Zoning Law.
2. **Conditional Use Application #2015-0326:** Unicorn Corporation is proposing to manufacture and retail concrete hollow blocks. This use is classified as "Manufacturing and Processing" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This area is identified as lot 030 B 21 in Tanapag village, and is zoned as Mixed Commercial.
3. **Conditional Use Application #2014-4028:** Saipan International Real Estate Development Corp. dba: Ocean Vista Resort is proposing to operate a hotel with villas and residential uses. This use is classified as a "Planned Development" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This proposal will be situated on lots H 328-4, H -328-1, and TR 21698 on Capital Hill along Isa Drive. These areas are zoned as Rural.

C. Communications/ Reports

D. Old Business.
1. None

E. New Business
1. Office Operations Report (Permit and Enforcement)
2. Review and Adoption of revised Zoning Fees

E. Executive (Closed) Session.

G. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Administrator, Therese T. Ogumoro, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Zoning Board Chairman

ESFDB recognizes teachers for years of services

During the culmination of Catholic Schools Week on Friday, students, parents, guardians, and guests witnessed the recognition of Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja's hardworking teachers.

Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja congratulates its Outstanding Catholic School Teachers Lea D. Maratita, Florinda M. Chavez, Mary Rose S. Lucero, and Edward C. Maratita Jr.

Showing a true dedication to Catholic education, Florinda Chavez is the longest tenured teacher. Chavez served the only Catholic school on Rota for more than 20 years, serving five school administrators.

As if serving the school is not enough, Chavez helps the church as Sunday reader, for special occasion Masses, and the First Holy communicants.

"ESFDB recognizes professional individuals that are ambassadors of Catholic education. It's because of the service and dedication of all our teachers, staff and administration that our students have ample opportunity to love, learn, and live their faith in service to others in all aspects of their life," said administrator/principal Carmen H. Atalig.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja teachers receive their plaques from school administrator/principal Carmen H. Atalig and San Francisco de Borja Parish administrator Rev. Fr. Charlie Borja.

"Teachers are the backbone of our Catholic educational system, providing day to day instruction in faith and academics. The excellence that these teachers display is an inspiration to all of us who work in Catholic education," said teacher and board chair Edward C. Maratita Jr. "Also, teachers often work hard and in silence, we hope that these awards honor our teachers who are doing really important work, whose stories haven't been shared."

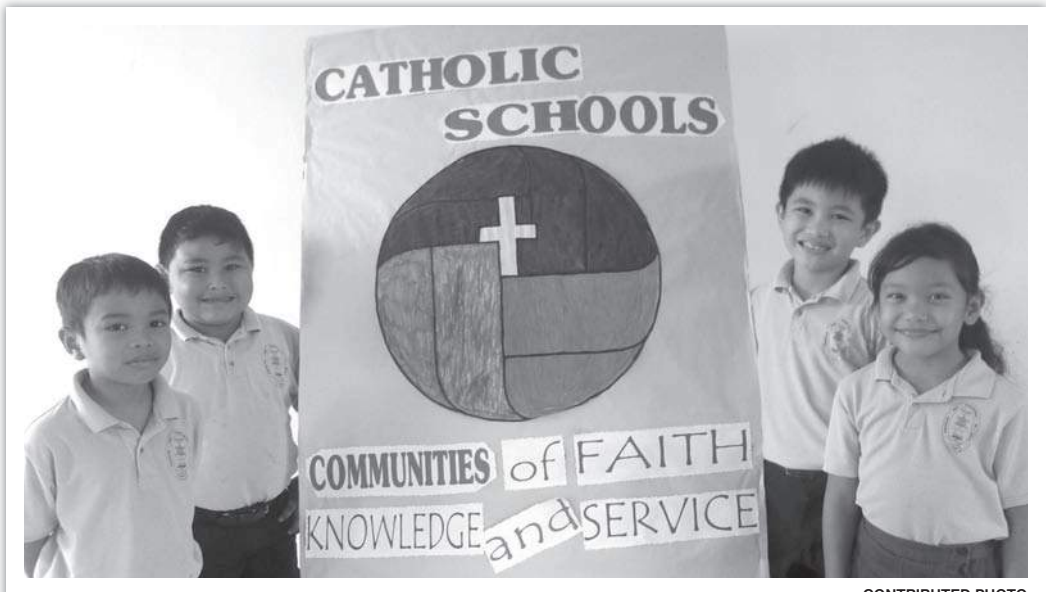
The teachers were recognized for their years of service to Catholic education; superior ability to foster excellence in education and contribute to the continuous improvement of student learning and the school environment; knowledge of the subject taught and the ability to effectively use materials relating to the subject; leadership in educational activities at the school; use of original or innovative instructional methods such as cooperative learning and interdisciplinary instruction; and the use of technology in instruction.

In addition, the teachers have a record of superior teaching as evidenced by student performance, honors, awards or other kinds of recognition; continued professional development as evidenced by participation in workshops, in-service training, conference, and/or advanced degrees; demonstration of exemplary interpersonal skills in communicating with students, parents and the community and in collaboration with other professionals; strong commitment to creating a climate of caring and respect conducive to effective teaching and learning; and strong commitment to creating a Catholic climate of caring and respect through effective teaching as Jesus taught.

The faculty would like to express their appreciation to Carmen H. Atalig, Rev. Fr. Charlie Borja, Monsignor Louis Antonelli, Sen. Teresita Santos (R-Rota), and 15th Rota Municipal Council. ***(ESFDB)***

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

ESFDB names essay and drawing contest winners



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Category 1 drawing contest winners, from left, Edward U. Maratita III, Marco Edward B. Hocog, John Henry V. Tacud, and Diah A'Ina Q. Maratita.

As part of the Catholic Schools Week celebration, Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja students recently participated in a drawing and essay contest. The theme "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service" was used for the event.

"The goal of the contest is to encourage the students to think about the role and importance of Catholic Schools Week, as many of them illustrated in their drawings and essays," said administrator/principal Carmen H. Atalig. "Their understanding and importance of Catholic Schools Week or Catholic education is a valuable reward."

"In addition, this was a chance for the students to showcase their God-given talents in drawing and essay writing, and to show appreciation to the many people who make up our Catholic school and the faithful Luta community," added Atalig.

The students participated in three categories. Category 1 was for the kindergarten to 1st grade level. Category 2 involved the second to fifth grade, while the Essay Category was for the sixth to eighth grade students.

The winners for Category I drawing contest were Edward U. Maratita, III (first grade), first place; John Henry V. Tacud (first grade), second place; and tie for third place Marco Edward B. Hocog and Diah A'Ina Q. Maratita (both first grade)

Category 2 winners for the drawing contest are Marvin DLC. Clitar (fifth grade), first place; Éclair Marj M. Ladao (third grade), second place; and Maria Althea C. Mendiola (fourth grade), third place.

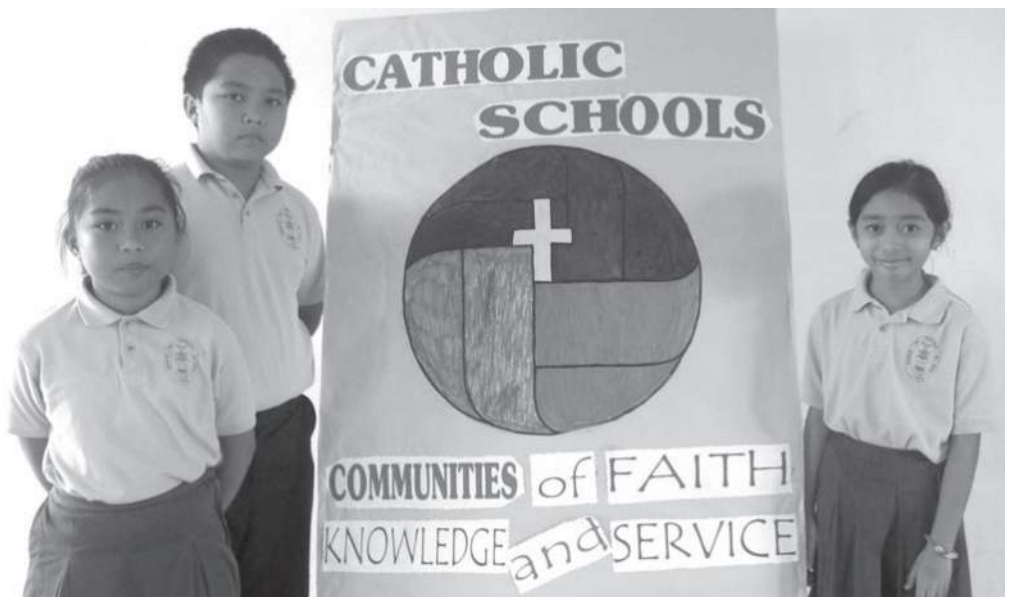
In the essay contest, the winners were Tyra Reese A. Calvo (eighth grade), first place; Aneshia Ciony M. Reyes (seventh grade), and Marjorie J. Banaag (seventh grade), third place.

The event was sponsored by the Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja board of directors.

The cash and in-kind donations were donated by the Pacific Regional Training Institute/Child, Youth, and School Services management and staff of Guam and Hawaii, Geraldine Dela Cruz (Rota), Christopher Concepcion of Delta Air Lines Saipan, Honolulu Federal Credit Union (Hawaii), Paul and Kendra Tanaka (Hawaii), and Col. Jon Takamura (Hawaii).

The administration, students, faculty and staff, and board of directors would like to express their appreciation to the judges from Guam and Hawaii, and donors. ***(ESFDB)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Essay category winners, from left, Marjorie J. Banaag, Aneshia Ciony M. Reyes, and Tyra Reese A. Calvo.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Category 2 drawing contest winners, from left, Maria Althea C. Mendiola, Marvin DLC. Clitar, and Éclair Marj M. Ladao.

Daito Bunka University group visits Saipan

Six students of Daito Bunka University in Tokyo, Japan, visited Saipan this week on a cultural exchange program with Northern Marianas College.

The students arrived Friday, Jan. 30, accompanied by Professor Hiroshi Tanaka and Associate Professor Shinya Tadakuma, as well as executive Keiki Saegusa of Central Sports, a key organizing partner of the Marianas Visitors Authority for events such as the Saipan Marathon, Tinian Turquoise Blue, and Rota Blue Triathlon.

Given Japan's longstanding role in the tourism economy of the Northern Marianas, the MVA welcomed the opportunity for Japanese students to visit the islands and experience island life, including college life. Many local students, families, and schools have welcomed exchange students through the decades, a tradition the MVA hopes the community will continue to build upon.

MVA

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio, fifth from right, welcomes students of Daito Bunka University during a courtesy call on Jan. 30, 2015. The students were accompanied by university Professor Hiroshi Tanaka and Associate Professor Shinya Tadakuma, as well as executive Keiki Saegusa of Central Sports.

On Saturday, Jan. 31, the group took a sightseeing tour of historic and scenic sites, including Banzai Cliff, Suicide Cliff, Last Command Post, and Mt. Tapochao. On Monday, Feb. 2, the group visited Northern Marianas College, where they had a campus tour, attended a lecture, and had lunch before their departure later that day to Japan. The group also made a courtesy call at the MVA during their visit. ***(MVA)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Free class on Japanese culture

The Consular Office of Japan on Saipan will organize a class about Japanese culture. Any interested person is kindly requested to register your name by Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2015, by contacting the Saipan Register at cojsf@ag.mofa.go.jp.

The class will be open to just 15 people on a first-come, first-served basis.

The class will be held Thursday, Feb. 26, 2015, from 2:30pm to 4:30pm, at the conference room of the Consular Office of Japan, second floor, Bank Hawaii Building, Mariana Heights Business Park, Puerto Rico, Saipan

The class will take up Japanese animation *Nitabo*, a story of the founder of Tsugaru, shamisen, origami (paper folding), Japanese sake, etc. ***(PR)***

Family grief support meeting today

The Compassionate Friends of Saipan will be holding its monthly grief support meeting today Feb. 5, from 6pm to 7:30pm, in the NMPASI conference room on Middle Road, in Gualo Rai. The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others to be supportive. For more information, e-mail tcfSaipan@gmail.com or call Jill Derickson (989-9821) or Donna Krum (783-0755). To learn more about The Compassionate Friends, visit their website at www.compassionatefriends.org. ***(PR)***

MHS Q2 report cards out tomorrow

Marianas High School will be distributing second quarter report cards to students on Feb. 5, 2015. Here are other events happening this month:

- Feb. 2-6: Counselor's Week
- Feb. 16: President's Day (a holiday)
- Feb. 26: Early dismissal for high school due to professional development for all PSS staff

Should you have any questions or need to make an appointment to see your child's teacher, call the Main Office at 237-3206/5/4. You can also check our website at www.marianashighschool.com. ***(PR)***

CVES to host Canary Walk-aThon

San Vicente Elementary School is inviting the public to join its Canary Walk-a-Thon on Feb. 7, from 8am to noon. A total of 16 food and non-food vendors are participating. There will be performances from Saipan Southern High School, Marianas High School, San Vicente, Saipan Music and Dance Studio and Get Fit CNMI. Performances will be from 9am to 11am. Raffle tickets will be sold with chances of winning a $250 gift certificate from Fish & Tackle, live animals such as piglets, goats, chickens, pigeons, and many other consolation prizes. Food vendors are Matty's, Hermans Bakery, Hill Top, to name a few. ***(PR)***

PREL education conference in July

PREL is proud to announce the 29th Pacific Educational Conference, to be co-hosted with the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Ministry of Education and the College of the Marshall Islands in Majuro this July.

Pre-ceremony activities will begin on July 27, 2015, with the opening ceremony dinner on July 28, 2015, where the 2014 PREL Teacher-of-the-Year award will be announced. The three-day PEC conference will be held from July 29 to 31.

Visit http://www.prel.org/sign-up/ for 2015 PEC registration and program updates, as well as other PREL news. ***(PREL)***

Joeten-Kiyu library closed this week

This is to inform the public that the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is closed from Feb. 3 to Feb. 7, 2015, due to its annual inventory. For more information, call 235-7322/23. ***(JKPL)***

BECQ brigade sets Tank Beach cleanup on Sat.

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be picking up trash at Tank Beach on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015, at 8am. If you would like to volunteer, meet the BECQ representatives on Saturday at the Tank Beach entrance at 8am. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a brigade T-shirt.

For more information about volunteering, contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1. ***(BECQ)***

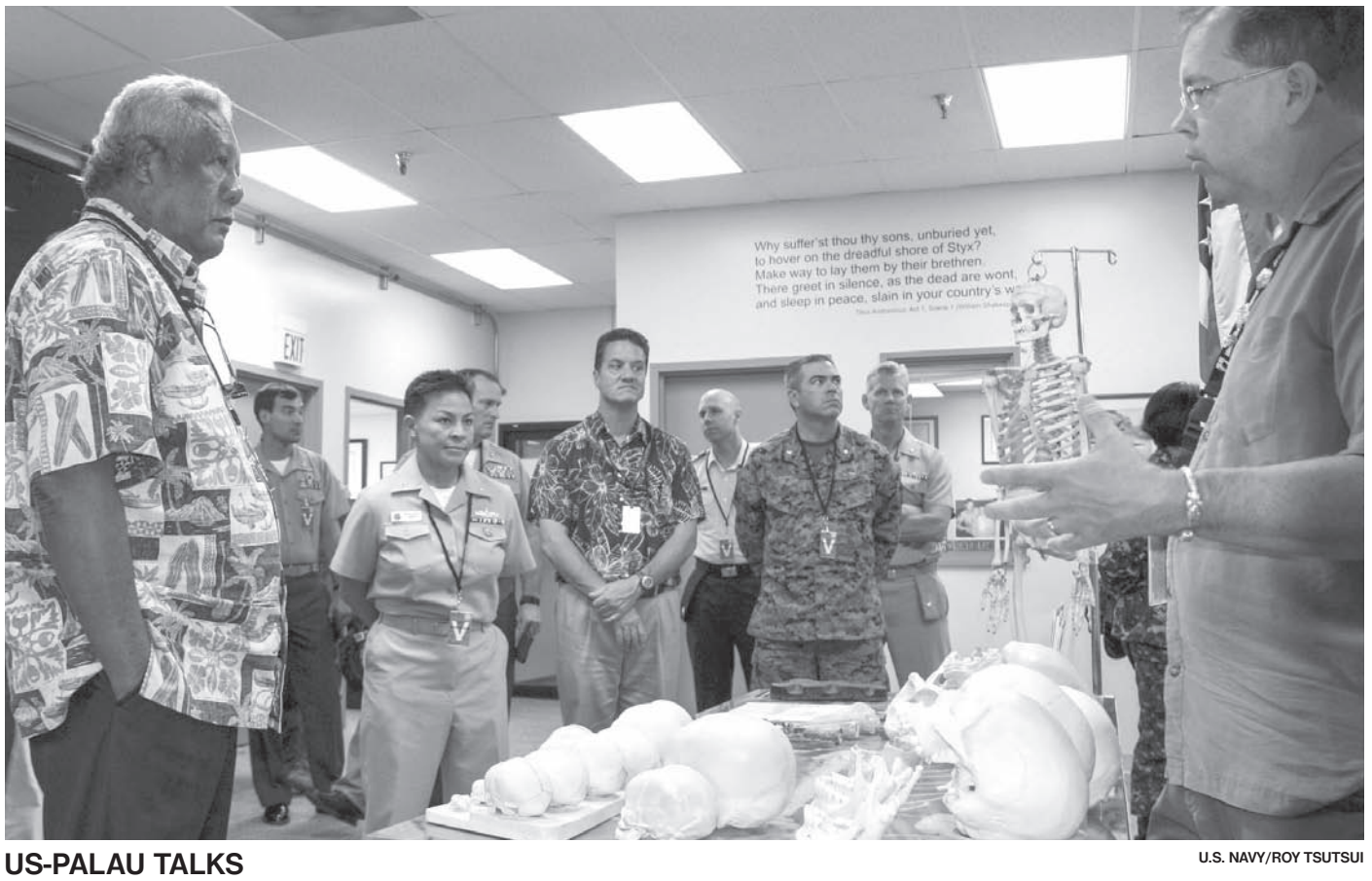
Air Force, Navy training on FDM, at Warning Area 517

The U.S. Air Force will conduct training at the island of Farallon de Mendinilla during the following times:

- Feb. 5, from 10am to 1:30pm and 3-9:30pm
- Feb. 6, from 6am to 6pm

The U.S. Navy will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on Feb. 3-4 from noon to 8pm

The general public especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators are advised to stay clear from the area during the dates and times indicated. ***(PR)***


Why suffer'st thou thy sons, unburied yet,
to hover on the dreadful shore of Styx?
Make way to lay them by their brethren.
There greet in silence, as the dead are wont,
and sleep in peace, slain in your country's w
EXIT

U.S. NAVY/ROY TSUTSUI

US-PALAU TALKS

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii—Rear Adm. Bette Bolivar, second from the left, listens to a presentation about the principles and challenges of identifying remains of American service members during recovery and analysis processes at the U.S. Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command in Hawaii Jan 28. Bolivar, commander, Joint Region Marianas/U.S. Pacific Command Defense Representative for Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Republic of Palau, was in Hawaii for the Joint Committee Meeting between Palau and the U.S.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy birthday to Jennifer Tegeita, who celebrated her special day on Feb. 4! Wishing you the best and many more to come! From your DYS family!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

For you, Davizin C. Nekaifes, our beautiful, little girl, I have a very special birthday wish: May your second birthday and every day of your life be as wonderful as you are to me. We love you. Greetings come from Mommy and the family.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Measles outbreak could have been prevented

Your child has a cough, runny nose, sore throat and a high fever. The symptoms point to a cold. Then white spots appear in the mouth and red spots on the face, and your family pediatrician says its measles. Distressed, you say, "I thought measles were a thing of the past."

Measles were a thing of the past in the United States, just like polio, which destroyed many lives until Jonas Salk in the early 1950s discovered a vaccine. Measles also were fought vigorously back then because the consequences were so deadly.

Before measles vaccines became commonplace in the early 1960s, an estimated 3 million to 4 million Americans a year contracted measles, and 400 to 500 died. Survivors often suffered blindness, deafness and neurological disabilities. Measles were not taken lightly; people wanted a vaccine because too many families suffered too much.

That's why the resurgence of measles and other preventable illnesses is so distressing. Parents who miss scheduled inoculations or believe the myth that vaccines cause autism are erasing decades of medical progress and putting us all at risk. How misguided, dangerous and selfish is that when history shows us a safe vaccine is available? The measles outbreak at Disneyland last month should sound an alarm that vaccinations aren't optional.

The latest measles outbreak has spread toward the 100 mark across several states in just a matter of weeks. Children are in isolation wards, and experts expect more cases as those infected with the highly contagious illness, spread through the air, come into contact with others who have skipped vaccinations. Arizona is monitoring nearly 1,000 people for possible measles exposure, and hospitals in the state are asking those who may have been exposed not to go doctors' offices, emergency rooms or urgent care clinics to minimize further exposures.

The irony is that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention declared measles eradicated in the United States in 2000. In 2001, there were about 100 measles cases nationally; last year there were 644 in 27 states, including Texas. Infections are certain to surpass last year's total and cost millions of dollars in health care. Vaccinations could have prevented this hard-to-control spread.

Opposition to vaccines is turning back the clock to a time we should never want to see again, and it's not just measles staging a comeback. In 2012, whooping cough cases in the United States were the worst since 1955. There were nearly 50,000 reported cases and 20 deaths, most of them babies younger than 3 months old. Do we really want to return to those dark, desperate days?

Getting vaccinated is a responsibility, not a choice. Get your children vaccinated.

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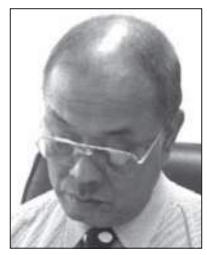
Sueno! Abisun Publiku

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*



Sueno un` finu` tanu` ma-u`usa kumu abisu para todu gi maseha haf` mamamaila`. Pot ihemplo, giya Pagan un` tautau umesalau ginen i chagu` hogsu` "sueno", abisu na guaha batku sige halom gi tanu`. Ha prepara siha i tautau ya sige malofan i kestat sine`su` para u mabende.

Ha trumpeta i federat "sueno" pot fuetsan immigrasion pot bula keha pot abusu guine gi hutnaleros ginen hiyuñg gi fakterian magagu. Chatta` ta attende estake humalom ya ha amot Marianas fuetsan disposision hutnaleru siha. Maliñgu mas direchon para ta gobietnan maisa hit lau ha yute` un` hogsu` basula i industrian magagu guine—Puerto Rico Dump—ni numesessita `nos kuantos miyon pesus para umana` gasgas. Diskuidu!

I uttimu "sueno" pot casino. Kasse i ti talili`e i didog na pinepble gi tautau-ta `an ha hatme halom salan gima`ta i industrian casino. `Nos kuantos gi man-ma`gas man-mama` kepble. Hita i `an soblan poñgpuñg gi papa` lamasa. Pot fabot gef`atan sa` dispues de malofan ekun uttimu suenu megai para u destrosia gi linala` familia guine.

■■■

Gi todu finapos-ta gigon ta gacha` i puntan i chita piot gi bandan offisiu i sigiente birada para papa`. Parehu yan man-sañgan na todu un` dagau hulu` siempre u poduñg papa`.

Namanman na i man-tufai yan fatsu na ginen offisiat publiku ti mali`e na makat machule` tatte hagas tronun niha. Lau guaha umatrebi siha guine na mapos na eleksion.

Mafa` fagas pachot niha asuntun natibu—indihinau—sino natibu. Mampos suspichosu na posision sa` mafa` hugete asuntunto-ta. Dispues, dudayu` kau fitme kinemprenden niha dichu asunto-ta fuera de mana supin tasi pot para u fan e`suette.

Yangin magahet in` kemprende asuntun natibu mauleg para hita na u guaha guine casino? Na ti este primera koyentura gi madestrosian linala` tautau tanu`? Umafagcha` este yan dinisehata gi todu animu para tana` fan ma-eduka famaguon-ta?

Siña ha` guaha adelantu gi bandan industrian turista ginen i casino. Lau sehan ñaihon un` ratu ya un` atan hafa futtunan famaguon-ta? Na ti magahet na hita offisiun `an poduñg pidason pan mientras tautau hiyoñg i man-guaguan siha na cho`chu`?

Ti hu komprende haf ` na mampos hit man-hasupak gi este na asuntu. Ni tanu`, fasilidat kandet, kandet, chalan yan sisteman aplacha` (sewer) taya` para este na planu. Haf` na tafa` bisiu pumega i toru gi menan kareta?

■■■

Teñga mañguentosa hit pot natibu. Lau hasan ta huñgog "inadiñgan" pot dichu asuntun tautau-ta siha gi señgsoñg. Guaha difirensia gi signifikasion dos palabra: kuentos yan adiñgan.

I mefe`na puru asuntun muron. I sigiente fotmat na modun hunta ayu mina` kasee maleletke ni ga`ga` politika siha. Kulan mohon hit ni publiku guaka ni ma-atgogoya ya kada ratu man-mabatsala hit katkuet lugat kinibrutu.

Enfin, `an seriosu i asuntu haf` na tatnai mana` guaha fotmat na inetnon yan asuntu siha ni para u fan madiskute? Haf` na ma-u`usa asuntun natibu kumu pugen politika? Man-malefa kasse na esta ta dimemoria huegon niha. Muñga marepite sa` sage` i man-na`tatah siha na finu` fabulas de chispas!

Lamegai asunto-ta ni debi hita mismu mauleg fotmat ta prekura.

■■■

Ilegña un` amiguhu na `nai hobengue` todu ha attetende. Gi idat kuarenta años ha diskontinua. `Nai sisienta años-gue` `nai ha repara na ni unu-gue` humahassu. Ha dagau i tuayan man-attende. "Guahu finenina ya yangin guaha soblante i otru".

■■■

Sige teñga ta ayuda i familia mahalan chenchulu antes. `Nai buyada esta kineni` guihan mapatten ñaihon. Kustumbren tanu` ni maliñgu gi santatte palu pot nuebu na areglu siha yan layeye pot man-hanau i hagas umesgaihon este na modun peska.

I signifikasioña layeye pot dinaña natibu gi inespihan mantension familia. Ginen dinaña un` chenchule manafitme mas inatuñgu` yan sensian ina`ayuda yan inafamauleg. Lastima sa` gaige este pa`gu gi fina` dinaña tininu yan maneskada.

■■■

Ilegña finu` atpahon: Muñga matufuñg haf` un` kusecha na ha`ane ke haf` un` tanom. Haf` sustansiaña este na finu` man-sabiu? Na ti pot preparasion famaguon-ta? Haf` tinanom-mu gi hatdin familia? Man-lachok yan brabu? Un` rerega diariu pat manu` ha` `nai magof hau? Dispues de un` kusecha, un` tanom tatte simiya?

■■■

Gi hiyuñg rubentason estaba un` peskadot para u etogcha`. Ha komprende haf` debi u chogue yan lokue` ha tuñgu` na gai piniligru. Ha atotga tumunog para u kone` i dañkulu na lagua, tataga`, gualafe, tarakitu yan lililug. Malefan ñaihon ni halu`u pot ha tuñgu` haf` dichu finatoña.

■■■

Duru gi alacha man-mapoñga hit na baba i niyog para hinemlo`ta. Ya taimanu na man-la`la` i tautau isla deste antes yan man-brabu na tautague? Lau puru este dinagen kompanian amot giya America pot para ta fahan mas attikulu `nai mapega kepblen niha. Dimoñu na dinage!

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Consultant is not the answer to CHCC's HR issues

Your recent article disclosing CHCC's desire to update its job classification and job compensation practices gives goose bumps to people like myself who is thoroughly familiar, knowledgeable, experienced, and trained in this line of public sector personnel management administration and human resources management work.

To do this, CHCC issued an RFP to procure the professional services of a consultant to work and develop recommendations for a "comprehensive review of job classification and job compensation." In other words, CHCC finds that its compensation system is not practical, flawed, outdated, inconsistent to some benchmark standards, and determined it as not acceptable by management opinion, thereby giving good reasons to engage the expert services of an external consultant to correct the problematic job valuation scheme.

As an interested observer of what goes on within CHCC, let us state some background references in order to link and provide the cue why CHCC is wrong doing this project by way of RFP. One, CHCC has a human resources management director or manager whose position responsibilities and job content include position classification and pay administration. Two, there exists within CHCC's disposal its promulgated and implementing regulations dealing with its position classification system. Three, the merit principles of personnel management system applies to CHCC as a recipient of federal funds. Forth, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act may come to play as CHCC is also hinting that other parts of its personnel management system, recruitment and staffing system in particular, are not conforming to compliance mandates on account of its practices being outdated and running afoul of statutory standards at the local and federal levels. Let's put the latter as a reserve subject for interesting future discussion among stakeholders and bureaucrats as we all search for permanent solutions balancing the diverse and divided public interests of the hospital.

Position classification and pay administration as a personnel management work is a *basic* job content and position responsibility of the human resource management director position of CHCC. Basic position responsibility means just that—it is a genuine, sanctioned, and all-inclusive work that comprises, among others equally situated, the total job of the human resources management director position. The other side but equally at par with the personnel management administration is the human resources management practices dealing with productivity expectations of known objectives or target levels of outcomes laid out by policies and execution of plans through effective and calculated planning strategies and engagement of all resources. In other words, the human resources management director position by design and structure would require the integration of the personnel management administration and human resources management into the organizational mission of CHCC. So by simplifying a conceptual view of the human resources management director position used by CHCC, even a novice with a glancing understanding over this would conclude that the problem here is not the position, but more than suspect and conclusively a given, it would be the "incumbent" of this position, unfortunately.

The principal rule in personnel management work suggests that the person must fit the job standards or job contents. It is never that the job standards should be fitted to serve any person. When confronted at a juncture when questions persists whether the perpetuation of practices that allows the job to be right-sized to the needs of a person, at this point in time a serious legal problem exists. Can it be corrected? Yes, absolutely. The position is the legal entity. If the person does not fit the position standards, the law requires that this should be disallowed and settled. How in heavens name and under ethical (truthful) action by competent and constituted appointing authority in CHCC would justify that a person who is not fit for the position would continue to hold a legally authorized position paid by public funds and continue to ascertain that this is acceptable? This is a correctable problem indeed, would you agree?

In the RFP, the scope of work under consideration is hedged on the "comprehensive review of job classification and job compensation." But the position classification system as a job evaluation method is an application found useful only by a few state and local government jurisdictions. The federal government abandoned this pay administration system many years ago. So, it is time to correct the system. Going forward with the status quo would only further aggravate the problem if CHCC perpetuates a method that spells cost aberration when other just as successful and proven methodologies could be better and come with minimal conflicts and contradictions. If the incumbent of the human resources management director position in CHCC is engaging in minimal job related responsibilities, knowing what point rating, factor comparisons, factor-point system of job evaluation would be just as normal, routine and basic core of the position. Other approaches may include Jaques's Equitable Payment, Peterson Decision Band Method, Hay Guide Chart-Profile Method, and expansive and involved methodology as well to include broadbanding should not be foreign and isolated tasks to this position.

By listing several alternative job evaluations systems, it is for the purpose of suggesting that compensation for public employees could be derived from many different, satisfactory and acceptable ways. It is not in the best interest of CHCC to hire a consultant just to figure out what is good for its going concern or what is in the market that is ready made and turnkey by design, and then it will hope that it would have traction later. More often than not, turnkey and boilerplate renditions by an external consultant only gathers dusts and left for it to come to a natural death, and future needs would be hooked to the consultant once again because no one in CHCC can perform what the consultant completed. Hence, CHCC has within its reach the power, force, and capacity it would receive from the human resources management director position it says is available for its disposal.

It is a tragedy if CHCC fails to realize that the issue of pay system is best handled by way of postponing its proposal going forward with an external consultant because all that would amount to is a "band aid" cover. What is at issue is a fundamental concern. A house constructed without the proper engineering design and specification plan is destined to collide with problems and unexpected outcomes. Obviously, this is to be avoided altogether and at all cost. On the other hand, a house just getting attention for an engineering design and during the work progress in the middle of its construction would not fare well because this signifies that failure in this scenario is due to negligence and would honestly render it to be unconscionable. The latter scenario is the case in point with CHCC at this point. Does the management of CHCC find it justified to continue construction work after noting the need for engineering design and approval in the middle of the construction process? Unless someone in CHCC is indispensable, we are hoping that it is time to check by having CHCC do its own reality check.

Correcting and rightsizing its recruitment and staffing culture, performance management, labor relations, employee disciplinary processes and procedures, fringe benefits considerations, IT capacity, employee civil rights protections, compliance and legal considerations, among others, are all important personnel management elements and system applications in need for CHCC to resolve before it could satisfy itself that the means of doing processes and procedures which are sanctioned and put in place would guarantee acceptable outcomes. Its human resource management director position is the key to transforming human resources capacity of CHCC under strict orders for consistency to and measured by approved system approaches in which its integrated plans of personnel management administration and human resources management pendulum would complement each other. This would require revamping and bringing CHCC to a level where what it does for its human resources capacity is systematized that would withstand changes it is navigating in due course. Hence, it is not feasible and conscionable to entertain hiring a consultant to perform a job that is assignable to the human resource management director position that CHCC said it is using for all its personnel management and human resource management works. Because most if not all these works are considered "basics" of the position, technically this is not the problem. An anomaly in a part of a well-oiled machine would function less than desirably. And, knowing this and yet if for no reason, it continues in constant motion, it should be a footnote that system approaches to problem solving and management practices at CHCC does not exist.

The question about the person filling the HR management director position is something else, and that should be reserved for another time and interesting discussion. Hopefully, there is a match of the person and position as stated in CHCC's personnel system. Hence, this is the issue. And, CHCC should avoid toying with external consultants to do a job that is performable by its internal capacity, as it should be, while addressing the core of the problem that narrows to system designs and their implementation steps.

Francisco R. Agulto
Kannat Tabla, Saipan

ADA protects job applicants from preemployment inquiries about disabilities

Under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is unlawful for an employer to make inquiries as to whether an applicant is an individual with a disability or as to the nature of such disability before making a conditional offer of employment. 42 U.S.C. § 12112(d); 29 C.F.R. § 1630.13(a).

On Feb. 3, 2015, the United States Department of Justice posted four settlement agreements with cities that had asked questions that were illegal under the ADA. The DOJ alleged that each of the cities had "engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination under the ADA by requiring applicants to disclose disabilities and/or medical information in their application prior to making a conditional offer of employment." See www.justice.gov.

The questions that had been asked in those cases were the following:

■ "Do you have any physical or mental conditions, which may impair your ability to perform the duties of the position(s) for which you are applying? Yes ___ No ___. If yes, please state the condition and the nature of your work limitations: _____" Settlement Agreement Between the United States of America and the City of DeKalb, Illinois, DJ # 205-23-59.

■ "Are you now receiving or have you ever received any benefits or payments to you or your doctor for any job related injury? If yes, when and where did this occur?" Settlement Agreement Between the United States of America and the City of Fallon, Nevada, DJ # 205-46-12.

■ "Check if any of the following are applicable: ___ Disabled Veteran ___ Disabled Individual." Settlement Agreement Between the United States of America and the City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina, DJ # 205-67-11.

■ Applicants were required to check box that applied to them: "[check box] "Disabled Veteran" [check box] "Disabled Person Not Entitled to Veteran's Preferences." Settlement Agreement Between the United States of America and the City of Vero Beach, Florida, DJ # 205-18-16.

Although an employer may not "conduct a medical examination or make inquiries of a job applicant as to whether such applicant is an individual with a disability or as to the nature or severity of such disability," the employer "may make preemployment inquiries into the ability of an applicant to perform job-related functions." 42 U.S.C. 12112((d).

More information regarding preemployment disability-related questions and medical examinations may be found at www1.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/ada18.cfm and at www.justice.gov/crt/about/drs/.

For more information or assistance with disability-related issues, contact Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI) at (670) 235-7273 or 7274, (670) 235-7275 (fax), or online at www.nmpasi.org.

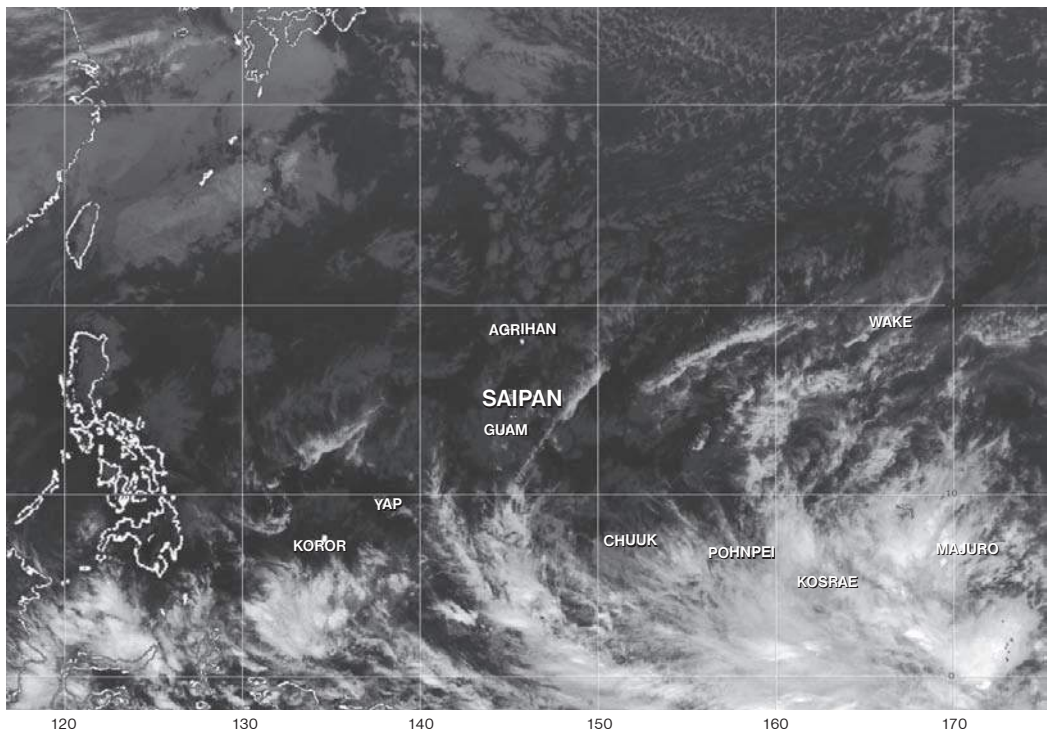
Jeanne Rayphand
Legal counsel, NMPASI

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2015
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends west-southwestward from 20N180E to south of Wake Island at 17N167E, then continues as a shear line to south of Koror near 2N134E. Scattered showers are evident along and up to 200 miles north of this boundary. Patchy stratocumulus clouds are found along and up to 600 miles north of this boundary. A near equatorial trough extends eastward across most of Micronesia from 1N130E through weak circulations centered south of Pohnpei at 3N159E and south of Majuro at 3N172E, then turns southeast to end near EQ173E. Extensive cloud cover, scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are present south of a line from 4N130E to 12N172E to EQ178E. This area includes Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Kwajalein and Majuro but lies south of Koror and Yap.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲83	▼76
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼76
Yap	Showers	▲84	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼78
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼79

Around the Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲73	▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲49	▼23
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲66	▼51
Honolulu	Windy	▲81	▼68
London	Partly Cloudy	▲43	▼33
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲77	▼54
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼68
Melbourne	Sunny	▲82	▼56
Miami	Cloudy	▲78	▼70
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲44	▼33
Osaka	Showers	▲48	▼39
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲41	▼31
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲48	▼28
Rome	Rain	▲55	▼50
Salem	Cloudy	▲55	▼48
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲61	▼52
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲43	▼23
Tokyo	Rain	▲43	▼35
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲53	▼34

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:40 AM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.1 Feet
9:14 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
3:07 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
8:13 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:17 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:18 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:18 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:19 PM
Monday	6:44 AM	6:19 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:19 AM	7:16 AM
Friday	8:06 AM	7:55 AM
Saturiday	8:52 PM	8:33 AM
Sunday	9:39 PM	9:11 AM
Monday	10:26 PM	9:50 AM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 5, 2015

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:10am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ6063	3:20am	7:10am	3, 4, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:00am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/275	6:05am	9:35pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:00pm	1:35pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:35am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ6053	8:50pm	2:10am+1	2, 3, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Dailly via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Jury: Toyota must pay $11M to victims of fatal crash

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A federal jury decided on Tuesday that the design of the 1996 Toyota Camry had a dangerous defect that was partly to blame for a fatal 2006 crash, and the automaker must pay nearly $11 million to victims.

Jurors said the company was 60 percent to blame for the accident, which left three people dead and two seriously injured. But they also found that Koua Fong Lee, who has long insisted he tried to stop his car before it slammed into another vehicle, was 40 percent at fault.

Lee, his family members, the family of a girl who died, and two people who were seriously injured sued Toyota Motor Corp. in U.S. District Court in Minneapolis. The lawsuit alleged the crash was caused by an acceleration defect in Lee's vehicle, but Toyota argued there was no design defect and that Lee was negligent.

"No amount of money ... will bring my life back, my life is not the same anymore," Lee said after the verdict, adding that he wanted the victims and their families to know: "I tried everything I could to stop my car."

Toyota released a statement saying the company respects the jury's decision but believes the evidence clearly showed the vehicle wasn't the accident's cause. The company said it will study the record and consider its legal options going forward.

AP

Koua Fong Lee stood with his wife Panghoua Moua, right, and attorney Bob Hilliard, left, following a verdict in the Toyota liability trial outside the Federal Courthouse in downtown Minneapolis, Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2015.

After the 2006 wreck, Lee was convicted of vehicular homicide and sentenced to prison. He won a new trial after reports surfaced about sudden acceleration in some Toyotas, and questions were raised about the adequacy of his defense. Prosecutors opted against a retrial and he went free after spending 2 1/2 years behind bars. He later sued.

The civil trial lasted three weeks, and jurors spent four full days deliberating.

Under Minnesota law, the way the jury allocated fault means Toyota is responsible for paying all damages, minus 40 percent of the amount awarded to Lee, said Lee's attorney, Bob Hilliard. That brings Toyota's total liability to $10.94 million. Lee will receive $750,000 of that total.

During the trial, Hilliard, told jurors there was a defect in the car's design. He said the Camry's auto-drive assembly could stick, and when tapped or pushed while stuck, it could stick again at a higher speed. He also accused Toyota of never conducting reliability tests on nylon resin pulleys that could be damaged under heat and cause the throttle to stick.

"This is what makes the car go. This is what turns it into a torpedo, a missile, a deadly weapon," Hilliard said during his closing argument.

Toyota said there was no defect in the design of the 1996 Camry. The company's attorney, David Graves, suggested that Lee was an inexperienced driver and mistook the gas pedal for the brake.

Toyota also noted that Lee's car was never subject to the recalls of later-model Toyotas.

Hilliard said the verdict means that other 1996 Toyota Camrys have defects, and perhaps the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration needs to take a look at the car, while owners of those vehicles need to make sure they are safe.

"I am 100 percent convinced in my heart and mind that there is a defect in this Camry, and that this defect caused this accident," he said.

Coke bets on super milk; more protein, less sugar

NEW YORK (AP)—Coke is coming out with premium milk that has more protein and less sugar than regular. And it's betting people will pay twice as much for it.

The national rollout of Fairlife over the next several weeks marks Coca-Cola's entry into the milk case in the U.S. and is one way the world's biggest beverage maker is diversifying its offerings as Americans continue turning away from soft drinks.

It also comes as people increasingly seek out some type of functional boost from their foods and drinks, whether it's more fiber, antioxidants or protein. That has left the door open for Coke step into the milk category, where the differences between options remain relatively minimal and consumption has been declining for decades.

"It's basically the premiumization of milk," Sandy Douglas, president of Coca-Cola North America, said at an analyst conference in November. If developed properly, Douglas said it is the type of product that "rains money."

Fairlife, which Coca-Cola formed in partnership with dairy cooperative Select Milk Producers in 2012, says its milk goes through a filtration process that's akin the way skim milk is made. Filters are used to separate the various components in milk. Then, more of the favorable components are added, while the less desirable ones are kept out.

The result is a drink that Fairlife says is lactose free and has 50 percent more protein, 30 percent more calcium and 50 percent less sugar than regular milk.

The same process is used make Fairlife's Core Power, a drink marketed to athletes that has even more protein and calcium than Fairlife milk.

Sue McCloskey, who developed the system used to make Fairlife with her husband Mike McCloskey, said Fairlife will be marketed more broadly to women who are the "gatekeepers" for their families' nutritional needs.

New Cold War: US, Russia fight over Europe's energy future

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States and Russia are once more locked in what could be a generation-defining conflict, and Europe is yet again the core battleground. But this Cold War reprise isn't about military supremacy.

It's about heat and electricity for tens of millions of Europeans. The points on the map aren't troop deployments, tank battalions and missile silos but pipelines, ports and power plants.

As the Obama administration escalates economic sanctions on Russia and weighs military support to Ukraine, it also has revved up a less noticed but far broader campaign to wean Central and Eastern Europe off a deep reliance on Russian energy. Success, U.S. officials say, would mean finally "liberating" former Soviet states and satellites from decades of economic bullying by Moscow.

To that end, Washington is helping set up new natural gas pipelines and terminals in a region that depends on Russia for more than 70 percent of its energy needs. It is pushing American companies' bids for nuclear plants and fracking exploration in Europe.

Yet as the U.S. makes headway, the Kremlin is fighting back, warning neighboring governments about the consequences of looking westward for fuel. Russia is trying to outmaneuver the U.S. on nuclear bids, buy up pipeline infrastructure across Europe and control not only how its vast energy reserves move westward, but what European governments can do with those supplies afterward.

"It's a chess match," said Amos Hochstein, the State Department's special envoy for international energy affairs, as he pored over a map of Europe dotted with existing and proposed pipeline routes.

Although the U.S. has pressed its European partners for decades to find new oil, gas, coal and nuclear sources, the crisis in Ukraine has upped the ante. Russia's takeover of Crimea last year and continued support for rebels in a brutal civil war in Ukraine has changed Europe's mindset about relying so heavily on Russian energy.

Study: Many herbal supplements aren't what the label says

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—Bottles of Walmart-brand echinacea, an herb said to ward off colds, were found to contain no echinacea at all. GNC-brand bottles of St. John's wort, touted as a cure for depression, held rice, garlic and a tropical houseplant, but not a trace of the herb.

In fact, DNA testing on hundreds of bottles of store-brand herbal supplements sold as treatments for everything from memory loss to prostate trouble found that four out of five contained none of the herbs on the label. Instead, they were packed with cheap fillers such as wheat, rice, beans or houseplants.

Based on the testing commissioned by his office, New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said Tuesday he has sent letters to the four major store chains involved—GNC, Target, Walmart and Walgreens—demanding that they immediately stop selling adulterated or mislabeled dietary supplements.

Schneiderman said the supplements pose serious risks. People who have allergies or are taking certain medications can suffer dangerous reactions from herbal concoctions that contain substances not listed on the label, he said.

"This investigation makes one thing abundantly clear: The old adage `buyer beware' may be especially true for consumers of herbal supplements," the attorney general said.

The herbal supplement industry criticized the method used to analyze the samples and raised questions about the reliability of the findings.

Walmart's vice president of Health & Wellness, Carmen Bauza, said testing by Walmart suppliers hasn't revealed any issues with the relevant products, but the company will comply with the attorney general's request to stop selling them in New York.

"We take this matter very seriously and will be conducting side-by-side analysis because we are 100 percent committed to providing our customers safe products," Bauza said.

Walgreen pledged to cooperate with the attorney general, who asked the store chains for detailed information on production and quality control.

"We take these issues very seriously and as a precautionary measure, we are in the process of removing these products from our shelves as we review this matter further," Walgreen spokesman James Graham said.

GNC said it, too, will cooperate, but spokeswoman Laura Brophy said: "We stand by the quality, purity and potency of all ingredients listed on the labels of our private-label products."

Target said it can't comment without reviewing the full report.

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Nation

Commuter train crashes into SUV stuck on tracks, killing 6

VALHALLA, N.Y. (AP)—A commuter train slammed into a sport utility vehicle stuck on the tracks at a crossing Tuesday evening, killing 6 people, mostly on the train, and injuring at least a dozen others, authorities said.

The northbound Metro-North Railroad train struck a Jeep Cherokee at a crossing in Valhalla, about 20 miles north of New York City, railroad spokesman Aaron Donovan said. Killed were the SUV's driver and five people aboard the train, he said, making this crash the railroad's deadliest.

The railroad crossing gates had come down on top of the SUV, which was stopped on the tracks, the spokesman said. The driver got out to look at the rear of the vehicle, then she got back in and drove forward and was struck, he said.

The train shoved the SUV about 10 train car lengths, and the SUV and the front of the train caught fire, he said. Smoke poured out of the scorched front rail car, its windows blackened.

Passengers described a bump and said they smelled gasoline from the vehicle.

More than 750 passengers likely were aboard the train, including Justin Kaback, commuting home to Danbury, Connecticut.

"I was trapped. You know there was people in front of me and behind me, and I was trapped in the middle of a car and it was getting very hot," he told ABC News. "All the air was turned off so there was no circulation so it was definitely scary especially when people are walking by on the outside and they said, `The train's on fire. There's a fire.'"

Passenger Stacey Eisner, who was at the rear of the train, told NBC News that she felt the train "jerk" and then a conductor walked through the train explaining what had happened. She said her train car was evacuated about 10 minutes later using ladders to get people out.

The other rail passengers were moved to the rear of the train, which had left Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan about 45 minutes earlier.

Passengers got off from the rear. About 400 of them were taken to a local rock climbing gym for shelter. Buses were heading there to pick them up and take them to their destinations.

Metro-North is the nation's second-busiest railroad, after the Long Island Rail Road. It was formed in 1983 and serves about 280,000 riders a day in New York and Connecticut. Service on its Harlem Line was suspended between Pleasantville and North White Plains after the crash.

Metro-North has been criticized severely for accidents over the last couple of years. Late last year, the National Transportation Safety Board issued rulings on five accidents that occurred in New York and Connecticut in 2013 and 2014, repeatedly finding fault with the railroad while also noting that conditions have improved.

Among the accidents was a Dec. 1, 2013, derailment that killed four people, the railroad's first passenger fatalities, in the Bronx. The NTSB said the engineer had fallen asleep at the controls because he had a severe, undiagnosed case of sleep apnea.

AP

A Metro-North Railroad passenger train smolders after hitting a vehicle in Valhalla, N.Y., Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2015.

Republicans challenge Obama on all fronts

WASHINGTON (AP)—Newly empowered congressional Republicans challenged President Barack Obama at both ends of the Capitol on Tuesday, voting in the House to repeal the health care program he signed into law but faltering in an initial Senate attempt to roll back immigration policies he issued on his own.

There was a third challenge as well, as Republican leaders announced the House would give final approval next week on legislation clearing the way for construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline. That would trigger Obama's threatened veto, the first in a new era of divided government.

The skirmishes all seemed likely to end in eventual defeat for Republicans, but served as a potent reminder of their power after Obama challenged them bluntly last month with his State of the Union address and a no-balance budget on Monday calling for higher taxes and new spending. The GOP won control of the Senate in last fall's elections, and has its largest House majority in nearly 70 years.

Badly beaten in last fall's elections, Democrats were defiant.

"They're baying at the moon, something that is not going to work," said the party's leader in the House, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, referring to Republicans as the health care vote neared.

The vote was 239-186 to repeal the health care law known as Obamacare. Similar votes have been held more than 50 times in the four years, but the day gave newcomers to Congress their first opportunity to vote to uproot the health care law they campaigned against last fall.

"Today, I am making good on my commitment to support a full repeal of Obamacare," said Rep. Alex Mooney, a West Virginia Republican who took his seat in Congress last month.

The day's vote was marked by a second difference. The bill included instructions to key committees to begin work on a replacement that the party promised in the 2010 political campaign. Officials described that as a measure of preparation in case the Supreme Court overturns a key portion of the existing program in a ruling expected this June.

Only three Republicans opposed repeal of the program, Reps. Bob Dold of Illinois and first-termers John Katko of New York and Bruce Poliquin of Maine.

Californians use 22 percent less water, but more cuts loom

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—December's rains enabled Californians to finally meet Gov. Jerry Brown's call for a 20 percent reduction in monthly water consumption, but more restrictions loom as the state adapts to long-term drought conditions.

California is by no means out of trouble, despite a survey released Tuesday that showed an unusually rainy month helped residents cut water use by 22 percent statewide from December 2013 levels.

The Sierra Nevada snowpack that supplies a third of California's water is 75 percent below its historical average. And for the first time in recorded history, there was no measurable rainfall in downtown San Francisco in January, when winter rains usually come.

Residents have reduced consumption since July, when the state authorized cities to fine people $500-a-day for violating restrictions on lawn watering and washing cars.

Other ideas now being considered by the state water board include mandatory reviews of city water systems for leaks and penalizing agencies that haven't discouraged water-wasting by their customers.

The governor called on Californians to use 20 percent less water last year when he declared a drought emergency. The closest they previously came to reaching that goal was in August, when water use dropped 11.6 percent.

In San Diego, a city of 1.3 million people that registered a 24 percent reduction in December, Adrian Campos said he and his wife yanked out their front and back lawns and replaced them with drought-tolerant plants. Others in the neighborhood also landscape with succulents, cactus and rocks.

"I don't know if the city should be credited with getting the word out," said Campos, 45. "I think San Diegans are very conscious of what is going on with the drought. Our neighbors and ourselves, we got rid of our lawns after seeing on the news that there was such a water shortage."

December 2013 was unusually dry, and California was deluged by a particularly heavy storm in December 2014. The board said that points to the potential for permanent savings if more people replace lawns with drought-resistant landscapes that don't need sprinklers.

"It reinforces what we thought all along, that the extent of outdoor water use is a huge driver of water conservation and water use," Board Chairwoman Felicia Marcus said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Tsarnaev lawyers push again to move trial out of Boston

BOSTON (AP)—More prospective jurors in the trial of Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev (joh-HAHR' tsahr-NEYE'-ehv) are set to be questioned even as Tsarnaev's lawyers ask a federal appeals court to order the judge to move the trial outside Massachusetts. Jury selection is scheduled to resume Wednesday after a two-day delay caused by a storm that dumped a foot of snow across much of Massachusetts. O'Toole has questioned 114 prospective jurors over nine days. On Tuesday, Tsarnaev's lawyers asked a federal appeals court to order O'Toole to move the trial. They argued that jury selection so far has made it clear that Tsarnaev cannot get a fair trial in Massachusetts because many people already believe he is guilty and have personal connections that make it impossible for them to be impartial.

Judge removes juror from Aaron Hernandez murder trial

FALL RIVER, Mass. (AP)—The judge overseeing the murder trial of former New England Patriots player Aaron Hernandez removed a juror Tuesday, saying there was evidence she had previously discussed evidence in the case and had an early interest in being seated on the panel. Later, the girlfriend of the man Hernandez is accused of killing testified that the day after he was found dead, the former NFL star tried to reassure her that the pain of losing a loved one would get better with time. Most of Tuesday's court session was spent on the problem with the juror, who has not been identified except by her jury number, 96. Bristol County Superior Court Judge Susan Garsh dismissed her after questioning her individually and closing the courtroom to hear evidence on the matter.

Asia

Taiwan plane with 58 aboard crashes in Taipei; 2 killed

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—A Taiwanese flight with 58 people aboard clipped a bridge shortly after takeoff and careened into a river Wednesday in the island's capital of Tapei, killing at least two people, officials said.

Parts of the wrecked fuselage of the turboprop ATR 72 jutted out of the shallow Keelung River just a couple dozen meters (yards) from the shore near the city's downtown Sungshan airport.

Rescuers clustered around the plane in rubber boats.

Aviation authority director Lin Chi-ming told a news conference that two people were killed aboard the TransAsia Airways flight. The country's Central News Agency later said three people had died, and that they were among passengers taken to a hospital. There was no immediate word given on the fate of the remaining people aboard.

CNA said the flight from Taipei to the outlying island of Kinmen lost contact with flight controllers at 10:55 a.m. and the fuselage landed in the Keelung River near the city's downtown Sungshan airport.

AP
In this image made from Associated Press Television video, a commercial plane lies in river after crashing in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2015.

It was the second of TransAsia's French-made ATR 72 to crash in the past year. Last July, a flight crashed while attempting to land on the island of Penghu off Taiwan's coast, killing 48 people and injuring another 10. Stormy weather and low visibility were suspected as factors in that crash.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Indonesian divers retrieve 6 more bodies from AirAsia crash

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesian divers discovered six more bodies Tuesday from the wreckage of the crashed AirAsia plane, bringing to 90 the total number bodies retrieved from the jetliner. AirAsia Flight 8501 crashed into the Java Sea on Dec. 28 with 162 people on board while flying from Surabaya, Indonesia's second-largest city, to Singapore. The National Search and Rescue Agency and traditional divers are continuing the search after the Indonesian navy halted its own efforts last week due to the difficulty of lifting the fuselage from the water. Agency spokesman Jusuf Latif said that the discoveries brought to 90 the total bodies retrieved from the crash. Some of the bodies were found floating off Sulawesi island, about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) east of the crash scene one month after the crash.

S. Korea soldier sentenced to death for killing 5 comrades

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A South Korean soldier was sentenced to death Tuesday for killing five comrades and injuring seven others in a shooting and grenade attack last year, the Defense Ministry said. Shooting rampages by bullied soldiers are not unusual in South Korea, which requires all able-bodied men to serve about two years in the military in the face of threats from North Korea. The soldier, surnamed Yim, has told investigators that he threw a grenade and opened fire on his colleagues in June after seeing drawings they made of him that he considered insulting. Yim had fled into the forest near the border with North Korea but was captured following a failed suicide attempt.

Indonesia to execute 8 for drugs, including 7 foreigners

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesia's government is preparing to execute eight drug smugglers, including seven foreigners, an official said Tuesday. The spokesman for the attorney general's office, Tony Tribagus Spontana, said two Australians, Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan, are among the foreigners. He did not provide the others' nationalities, but the attorney general earlier told Parliament that they are from Brazil, Nigeria, France, Ghana and the Philippines. Sukumaran, 33, and Chan, 31, are being held in Kerobokan Penitentiary on the tourist island of Bali. They filed for judicial reviews last week, but Spontana ruled out the requests. They are among nine Australians who were arrested in 2005 on charges of attempting to smuggle 8.3 kilograms (18.3 pounds) of heroin to Australia from Bali. The group has been dubbed the "Bali Nine" by Australian media.

Firebombing of packed Bangladesh bus kills 7

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—Attackers threw crude fire bombs at a packed bus in Bangladesh early Tuesday, setting it alight as it moved along a highway and leaving at least seven people dead and 16 injured during a nationwide strike called by the opposition.

The pre-dawn attack, the latest during a surge in political violence, came as the bus traveled from the coastal city of Cox's Bazar to the capital, Dhaka, said Uttam Chakrabarty, police chief in the Comilla district where the bombing occurred. The area is about 90 kilometers (55 miles) east of the capital.

He blamed opposition activists for the attack, but they denied involvement.

The injured have been hospitalized, mostly for burns, he said.

"I along with my cousin opened the window and got out," said Muhammad Shariful, a 19-year-old survivor. "Later we noticed that my friend had not come out. We searched the surrounding area, and then saw that he was lying at one side of the street with fire burning all over his body."

Political attacks—mostly fire bombings of vehicles—have killed at least 53 people since early January, when an opposition alliance led by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia ordered a nationwide transportation blockade in an attempt to force Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to step down. The two politicians have long battled for political supremacy in the South Asian nation.

The bus attacked Tuesday, unlike many vehicles traveling on major roads since the blockade was ordered, had no security escort from the police or the country's paramilitary border guards.

Authorities blame opposition activists and hired thugs for the attacks. Zia and her aides deny involvement.

The opposition has also demanded that schools, offices and businesses close during a nationwide general strike that is to continue until Thursday evening.

Zia's party and its partners boycotted 2014 elections after being told there would be no neutral monitor overseeing the voting. That allowed Hasina to win a new 5-year term. Hasina says new elections will not be held until 2019.

The renewed violence ended a year of relative calm in Bangladesh, where politics has long been accompanied by chaos. Political violence left nearly 300 people dead in 2013.

The bloodshed has been condemned by Western countries and the United Nations, which have called for a dialogue between the two sides.

But the Jamaat-e-Islami party, the main partner of Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party, has remained a stumbling block.

Hasina has said Zia could help initiate talks by removing Jamaat-e-Islami from her alliance.

Jamaat-e-Islami bitterly opposes Hasina, who has targeted the party's leaders in war crimes trials for their actions during Bangladesh's war of independence from Pakistan in 1971. Jamaat-e-Islami opposed the 9-month war, which was led by Hasina's father, independence leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Thai police allege Internet conspiracy to insult monarchy

BANGKOK (AP)—Thai police have arrested six people accused of being part of a conspiracy to slander the country's monarchy on the Internet, in the latest move by the military-installed government limiting freedom of expression.

Police said the six belong to a group called the Banpodj Network that allegedly spread anti-monarchy propaganda over social media. A police statement on Tuesday described the network as a serious threat to the monarchy and the nation's stability, saying it incited "chaos and hatred in society."

Recent social media postings by the Banpodj Network reflect a more general anti-establishment position rather than focusing on Thailand's royal family. The military junta that seized power in a coup last May and its supporters come in for particular, often harshly worded, criticism.

Although strong anti-monarchy views seem limited to a tiny fringe of Thailand's population, the junta has prioritized protecting the monarchy's reputation and vigorously pursues those suspected of disloyalty to the crown.

Insulting the monarchy is punishable by three to 15 years' imprisonment under the world's harshest lese majeste law. The police did not announce what charges would be filed, but one possibility is violating the 2007 Computer Crime Act, which has penalties of up to seven years in prison.

The prospect that instability will ensue when 87-year-old King Bhumibol Adulyadej ends his long reign is a matter of widespread concern in Thailand. Many analysts link the country's past decade of sometimes-violent political conflict to a power struggle over who will lead the government through the royal succession.

Criticism such as found in postings by the Banpodj suspects is common among supporters of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted by a military coup in 2006 and whose sister's government was ousted last year. His supporters believe that royalists, jealous of Thaksin's electoral popularity, encouraged his overthrow.

World

Jordan executes 2 al-Qaida prisoners after IS kills pilot

AMMAN, Jordan (AP)—Islamic State group militants burned a captured Jordanian pilot to death in a cage, according to a purported video of the violence released Tuesday. The kingdom, which had vowed a swift and lethal response, executed two al-Qaida prisoners by hanging early Wednesday.

The pilot's gruesome death sparked outrage and anti-Islamic State group demonstrations in Jordan. The video emerged after a weeklong drama over a possible prisoner exchange for a female al-Qaida operative imprisoned in Jordan who was one of the two prisoners executed.

The Jordanian military confirmed the death of 26-year-old Lt. Muath Al-Kaseasbeh, who was captured by the extremists in December when his F-16 crashed while he was flying a mission as part of the U.S.-led air campaign against the Islamic State group.

He was the first airman participating in the U.S.-led bombing raids against militant positions in Syria and Iraq to be captured.

In Washington, Jordan's King Abdullah II and President Barack Obama vowed in a hastily arranged White House meeting not to let up in the fight against the Islamic State group. Jordan, a staunch Western ally, is a member of the coalition.

AP

President Barack Obama, right, meets with King Abdullah II of Jordan in the Oval Office of the White House, on Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2015, in Washington.

In a first response to the killing of the pilot, Jordan executed Sajida al-Rishawi and Ziad al-Karbouly, two Iraqis linked to al-Qaida, government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani said. Another official said they were executed by hanging.

The executions took place at Swaqa prison about 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of the Jordanian capital of Amman. At sunrise, two ambulances carrying the bodies of al-Rishawi and al-Karbouly drove away from the prison with security escorts.

Over the past week, Jordan had offered to trade al-Rishawi, a failed suicide bomber, for the pilot, but froze any swap after failing to receive any proof that the pilot was still alive. Jordanian TV said the pilot was killed as long ago as Jan. 3.

Al-Rishawi had been sentenced to death after her 2005 role in a triple hotel bombing that killed 60 people in Amman orchestrated by al-Qaida in Iraq, the predecessor of the Islamic State group. Al-Karbouly was sent to death row in 2008 for plotting terror attacks on Jordanians in Iraq.

Al-Kaseasbeh had fallen into the hands of the militants when his F-16 crashed near Raqqa, Syria, the de facto capital of the group's self-styled caliphate.

In the 20-minute video purportedly showing his killing, he displayed signs of having been beaten, including a black eye. Toward the end of the clip, he is shown wearing an orange jumpsuit. He stands in an outdoor cage as a masked militant ignites a line of fuel leading to it.

The video, which threatened other purported Jordanian pilots by name, was released on militant websites and bore the logo of the extremist group's al-Furqan media service. The clip featured the slick production and graphics used in previous Islamic State videos. The video could not immediately be confirmed independently by The Associated Press.

The killing of the 26-year-old airman appeared aimed at pressuring the government of Jordan—a close U.S. ally—to leave the coalition.

Jordan's role in a bombing campaign targeting Muslims is not popular in Jordan. However, some said the extremists' brutal killing of a fellow Muslim could galvanize resentment against them among fellow Sunni Muslims in the region.

At their White House meeting, the Jordanian monarch and Obama affirmed that "the vile murder of this brave Jordanian will only serve to steel the international community's resolve to destroy ISIL," said White House spokesman Alistair Baskey, using an alternate acronym for the extremist group.

UK moves toward making babies from DNA of 3 people

LONDON (AP)—Britain moved Tuesday toward allowing scientists to create humans from the DNA of three people.

The technology aims to liberate future generations from inherited diseases, but critics say it crosses a fundamental scientific boundary and could lead to "designer babies."

The U.K.'s House of Commons voted 382-178 in favor of legislation to license these experiments. If approved in the House of Lords, Britain would become the world's first nation to allow genetic modifications in human embryos.

"This is a bold step to take, but it is a considered and informed step," Health Minister Jane Ellison told the Commons.

The technology is completely different from that used to create genetically modified foods, where scientists typically select individual genes to be transferred from one species into another. But critics say it crosses a red line, since changes made to embryos will be passed on to future generations, with the potential for unforeseen consequences.

While this legislation was drafted specifically to grant permission only for certain specified techniques, critics fear it will encourage scientists to push for other experiments in the future.

The protests are "about protecting children from the severe health risks of these unnecessary techniques and protecting everyone from the eugenic designer-baby future that will follow from this," said David King, director of the secular watchdog group Human Genetics Alert.

The technology altering a human egg or embryo before transferring it into a mother with defects in her mitochondria, the energy-producing structures outside a cell's nucleus. These genetic defects can result in diseases including muscular dystrophy, heart, kidney and liver failure and severe muscle weakness.

Scientists would remove the nucleus DNA from the egg of the prospective mother and insert it into a donor egg from which the nucleus DNA has been removed. The resulting embryo would have the nucleus DNA from its parents but the mitochondrial DNA from the donor. This can be done two ways—before or after fertilization—in the techniques approved by the Commons.

Scientists say more than 99 percent of the DNA in the resulting child would come from its parents, with a tiny fraction coming from the donor egg.

Britain's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Sally Davies, said the law would give women with mitochondrial disease "the opportunity to have children without passing on devastating genetic disorders."

Pope decrees slain Salvadoran Archbishop Romero a martyr

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Thirty-five years after he was gunned down by a right-wing death squad as he celebrated Mass, Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero moved a step closer to possible sainthood Tuesday when Pope Francis declared he was a martyr killed out of hatred for his Catholic faith.

The decree by the first Latin American pope ended decades of debate over whether Romero—a hero of the liberation theology movement—was slain for his politics or his preaching. It opens the way for Romero to be beatified as early as this year, though no date has been set.

A human rights campaigner, Romero had spoken out against repression by the army at the beginning of El Salvador's 1980-1992 civil war between the right-wing government and leftist rebels.

His assassination on March 24, 1980, presaged a conflict that killed nearly 75,000 people.

Romero's sainthood cause had been held up for years by the Vatican, primarily due to opposition from conservative Latin American churchmen who feared his perceived association with liberation theology would embolden the movement that holds that Jesus' teachings require followers to fight for social and economic justice.

Under then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith had launched a crackdown on liberation theology, fearing what were viewed by church conservatives as its Marxist excesses.

A conservative who had spoken out against liberation theology in the past, Romero experienced a transformation of sorts following the murder of his friend, the Rev. Rutillo Grande, a Jesuit priest who was gunned down after helping Salvadoran peasants organize.

In a now-famous homily delivered the day before he was killed, Romero reminded the government's police and soldiers that no one is ever obliged to obey an order that is "against the law of God."

UN urges stepped up regional operations against Boko Haram

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The U.N. Security Council on Tuesday urged immediate stepped up regional military coordination and operations to more effectively combat the Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria and neighboring countries.

The council reiterated its "deep concern" in a statement that Boko Haram is "undermining the peace and stability of the West and Central African region."

Council members condemned the escalating attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria and against Chadian army soldiers deployed to fight the terrorist group in Cameroon.

The council singled out the Islamic extremist group's recent attacks on Maiduguri, the biggest city in northeast Nigeria, in Borno State and in the Lake Chad Basin region including against the Chadian army.

The council commended the Chadian army's swift assistance in the fight against Boko Haram in Cameroon, "during which 123 Boko Haram combatants were neutralized and others were captured." It also noted an operation on Jan. 29-30 near the Cameroon border town of Fotokol in which four Chadian soldiers were killed and 12 injured.

African leaders at a summit Saturday authorized the creation of a 7,500-strong multinational force to fight Boko Haram.

Boko Haram warned against the coalition force and said it will attack Niger, if it sends troops, just as it has attacked Cameroon, according to a message posted Sunday by the SITE intelligence monitoring service.

Environment

Mercury levels rising in Pacific yellowfin tuna, study says

By GEOFFREY MOHAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

A Filipino fisherman hauls ashore his catch—a Pacific yellowfin tuna. WWF

Mercury levels in yellowfin tuna caught in the Pacific Ocean have been rising at a 3.8 percent annual rate since 1998, according to a new study.

The findings, published online Monday in the journal Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry, add to evidence that air pollution, particularly from burning coal, is pumping mercury into the ocean food chain, potentially posing a hazard to human health.

"Evidence is piling up that the methyl mercury has an anthropogenic source," said University of Michigan ecotoxicologist Paul Drevnick, lead author of the study. "It's coming from mercury emissions that are falling into the ocean."

The levels found in yellowfin, a species that is not at the top of the food chain and could be considered a bellwether, are "concerning," said co-author Carl Lamborg, who conducted the research while at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts, and now is at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

"What this number is saying is that the amount of mercury in fish is getting higher and higher all the time, and if it keeps going like that, at some point, most every kind of fish is going to be potentially hazardous," Lamborg said. "Where that point is, I don't know."

None of the measured levels of methyl mercury, the kind that is absorbed by the body, are likely to be a current hazard to health, and they probably don't outweigh the health benefits of a fish-enriched diet, according to the researchers.

But the data appear to undermine an element of the legal argument that kept tuna canning companies from having to post warnings on products sold in California, under Proposition 65. At the time, canners offered scientific studies suggesting that methyl mercury in tuna was coming from natural sources, such as deep ocean vents.

The state Superior Court agreed in 2006 and also ruled that the Proposition 65 warning was pre-empted by federal rules, and that methyl mercury levels were too low to merit warnings. The ruling was upheld on appeal in 2009.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency are updating their recommendations about fish consumption and, for the first time, are recommending that pregnant women's weekly diet include a minimum of 8 to 12 ounces of fish known to be low in mercury, to promote fetal development and growth.

The agencies' draft recommendations still caution pregnant or breastfeeding women to avoid tilefish from the Gulf of Mexico, shark, swordfish and king mackerel. They also recommend that such women limit consumption of white (albacore) tuna to 6 ounces a week.

Yellowfin is more often sold to consumers in steak form, but is used in small amounts in canned "light" tuna, which is mostly skipjack, according to SeafoodHealthFacts.org, an academic coalition based at Oregon State University. The FDA has found slightly higher levels in "white" or albacore tuna, but still below one part per million.

Climate models don't over-predict warming, study shows

By GEOFFREY MOHAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

If you listen to climate change skeptics, Earth's surface hasn't warmed appreciably in the last 15 years, and any "record" set last year is just the result of the planet doing what the planet naturally does.

It turns out they're right, but for the wrong reasons, according to a study published online Wednesday in the journal Nature.

There is no inherent bias in climate models that makes them over-estimate the effects of human activity, according to the study.

"Cherry picking" the most recent 15-year interval to refute climate change modeling is misleading and obscures the long-term agreement between the models and measurements, according to study co-author Piers Forster, an atmospheric physicist from the University of Leeds, England.

A study that combined 114 possible 15-year trends since 1900 found that there was nothing statistically biased in the ways model-generated data differed from actual measurements of global mean surface temperatures. These short trends cannot predict "chaotic" fluctuations in such factors as ocean currents, according to the study.

A similar analysis of every possible 62-year trend was much better at picking up the effects of human activity on rising global temperatures, the study found.

"What people have done before is cherry picking to try to come up with their preferred explanation for a particular period," Forster said. "We tried to be more objective than that and look at all the possible begin dates and end dates."

For instance, if you take 1927 as a beginning, then 110 of 114 simulations turn out to underestimate the observed temperature trends, the study noted. With 1998 as a beginning date, the models over-estimate the actual change.

Critics of climate science have used the 1998 start date to dismiss the thesis that man-made activity is contributing to rising surface temperatures on Earth's surface, as a consensus of scientists say.

The researchers chose the 15- and 62-year intervals because they are the durations referenced most often by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which focuses particularly on accelerated warming in the 1950-2012 period.

Forster and Jochem Marotzke, director of the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology in Hamburg, Germany, looked at how models handled "forcing" of the climate from man-made and other factors, at feedback from such forcing, and random climate variability.

They found that the models are not biased toward overstating the roles of forcing and feedback. Modeling over the shorter intervals, however, tends to be more susceptible to small errors from unpredictable periodic climate variations, they found.

That element of "chaos" most often is introduced by sudden shifts in ocean behavior, the authors suggest.

"The ocean just fluctuates and changes from time to time and that is quite unpredictable, so it can give significant 15-year counter-trends," Forster said. For that reason, some 15-year intervals can lag behind the measured temperature trends, he said.

In Memory of our Beloved

JOSEPH KILEN S. BERKI

Lovingly known as "Chief" and "Dad" to numerous nieces and nephews
April 03, 1938 – January 29, 2015

A retired Chief Security for the Nauru Building, a loving brother, husband and father, was called to his eternal rest by our Lord at the age 76.

In his new life, he now joins his:
Wife: Francesca Rogolifoi Kaipat Berki
Sons: Kopa "Koby" Koninnis
Cypriano Kaipat Berki
Daughter in-law: Melva Muna Berki

His love and peaceful spirit will live on in the hearts of his:
Wife: Alma Ng Berki
Children: **Lucky** Koninnis & Estina Meippen
(†) **Kopa** "Koby" Koninnis & Gina (†)
Amena "Weires" Koninnis and Nexi
Catherine & Edward Dela Cruz (EJ/Sharon, Patrick & Children, Jason/Leina & Children, Jannel/Ton & Children, Tricia, Fermin/Jenn & Children)
Myrna & Karatel Phillip (Daniel, David/Jessiemae & Children, Yvonne/Shaquiell & baby boy, Brandon/Lang
(†) **Cypriano**/(†) **Melva Berki** (Joseph Ramon "JR") Dawn Mullican (Jerica & Cypriano Jr)
Manuel & Fuamatala Berki and son, Jonathan Daryll
Claudine & Pwoch Fitial (Leodine/Shane and Sophie)
Aileen, Mariel and **Meillene** Ferrer

Brothers/Sisters and Spouses:
(†)Francisco Sekerias/Anasia Joysa
Fanerio Sekerias/Nosie Nina
Fubiana Sekerias/(†)Kastor Ichu
Winiona Sekerias/(†)Anpio Renuk
Achelina Sekerias/ (†) Tasi Otoko
Enrasia Sekerias/ (†) Deo William

Our beloved Joseph will be with us for the last time on Friday, February 06, 2015 beginning at 8:30am at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral with responso service and public visitation. Mass of burial will be celebrated at 11:00am followed by interment services at Mt. Carmel cemetery.

Life & Style

Harper Lee book could also mean a 'Mockingbird' movie sequel

NEW YORK (AP)—The movie version of "To Kill a Mockingbird" is the rare adaptation as beloved as its source material.

So when Harper Lee and her publisher announced Tuesday that this summer they'll release the 88-year-old author's second book, "Go Set the Watchmen," a kind of sequel to "To Kill a Mockingbird," the shockwaves were felt almost as much in Hollywood as they were in the book world.

The movies, after all, love a sequel. And rare is the chance to follow up one of the most iconic American films, half a century later.

If Lee agrees to sell the movie rights of her new book, it can be expected to be one of the most eagerly sought novels for optioning to the big screen. Particularly since Lee said Tuesday that "Go Set the Watchman" follows her young heroine, Scout, into adulthood, it's sure to be feverishly pursued by producers. It's likely to spark a bidding war well before it lands on book shelves July 14.

Lee

Such an opportunity could draw in a host of high-profile producers. Oprah Winfrey, for one, has called "To Kill a Mockingbird" her favorite book. (In a statement Tuesday, she said: "I couldn't be happier if my name was Scout.")

Starring Gregory Peck and featuring a young Robert Duvall as Boo Radley, "To Kill a Mockingbird" has regularly been ranked among the greatest American movies. It won three Oscars, including best actor for Peck and best-adapted screenplay for Horton Foote. In 1995, it was added to the National Film Registry, and in 2003 the American Film Institute listed Peck's Atticus Finch as the greatest movie hero of the 20th century.

"Congratulations to Harper Lee," Duvall staid in a statement Tuesday. "I am looking forward to reading the book. The film was a pivotal point in my career and we all have been waiting for the second book."

Mary Badham, who was Oscar nominated at age 10 for her performance as Scout, only acted in a handful of films and TV shows after "To Kill a Mockingbird." Almost 40 years after her last film, she came out of retirement to appear in the 2005 indie drama "Our Very Own." Badham didn't respond to requests for comment Tuesday.

Whitney Houston's daughter 'fighting for her life'

ROSWELL, Ga. (AP)—Bobbi Kristina Brown wanted to sing, act and dance like her megastar parents, Whitney Houston and R&B artist Bobby Brown. Instead, she has mostly made tabloid headlines for drug use and family disputes—the same perils that derailed their careers.

Just like her mother three years ago, Bobbi Kristina was found face-down and unresponsive in a bathtub as the music industry prepared for the Grammy Awards.

■■■

ATLANTA (AP)—An attorney representing Bobby Brown says the entertainer's daughter, Bobbi Kristina Brown, isn't and never has been married.

Brown's attorney Christopher Brown released a statement Tuesday disputing reports that Bobbi Kristina Brown is married to Nick Gordon. Bobbi Kristina Brownhas been hospitalized since Jan. 31 after being found unresponsive in a bathtub at a suburban Atlanta townhome. Gordon and a friend called police.

In January 2014, a representative for the family confirmed to The Associated Press that Brown and Gordon had gotten married, but did not release any details.

■■■

As the pop star's 21-year-old daughter lay hospitalized Monday, police in Roswell, Georgia, issued a very brief incident report, saying officers were called Saturday in response to her "drowning" at her home in suburban Atlanta. Her husband, Nick Gordon, was at the scene and tried to revive her while a friend called 911.

"Bobbi Kristina is fighting for her life and is surrounded by immediate family," a Houston family statement said Monday. "We are asking you to honor our request for privacy during this difficult time. Thank you for your prayers, well wishes, and we greatly appreciate your continued support."

With no details forthcoming from police or family about her condition or what may have caused the tragedy, many people looked to see what she's been posting online. Her last tweet, from Thursday, reflected obvious frustration over her failure to break out as an entertainer: "Let's start this career up&&moving OUT to TO YOU ALLLL quick shall we !?!???!"

AP

In this Aug. 16, 2012, file photo, Bobbi Kristina Brown, left, and Nick Gordon attend the Los Angeles premiere of "Sparkle" at Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles.

The circumstances were eerily similar to those of Feb. 11, 2012, when Houston's assistant found the singer's lifeless body face-down in a foot of water in her bathtub at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Authorities found prescription drugs and listed heart disease and cocaine use as contributors, but concluded that she accidentally drowned.

Bobbi Kristina, then 18, became so distraught that she needed to be hospitalized.

"She wasn't only a mother, she was a best friend," she told Oprah shortly thereafter.

Bobbi Kristina identified herself on Twitter as "Daughter of Queen WH," "Entertainer/Actress" with William Morris & Co., and "LAST of a dying breed."

But her mother was an impossible act to follow.

Houston had her first No. 1 hit at 22, and then a flurry of No. 1 songs, selling more than 50 million records in the United States alone. Her voice, an ideal blend of power, grace and beauty, made classics out of "Saving All My Love For You," "I Will Always Love You," "The Greatest Love of All" and "I'm Every Woman." Her six Grammys joined many other awards.

Bobbi Kristina inherited her mother's entire estate, but not her voice. Aside from her family's short-lived reality TV show "The Houstons: On Our Own," she has mostly appeared in online "selfies" and paparazzi images.

Houston met R&B star Bobby Brown at the Soul Train Music Awards in 1989. The gifted singer and her bad boy partner married in 1992, much to the dismay of Houston's family. It was a toxic relationship, characterized by domestic violence and drugs.

Bobbi Kristina was born a year later, and was just a toddler when Houston described herself as a "functioning junkie" to S2SMagazine. Her husband also struggled with addiction, so by 2002, the family moved to suburban Atlanta to attend the healing services of a singer-turned evangelical preacher.

The girl made a few appearances on "Being Bobby Brown," the reality show that infamously captured her parents fighting, swearing and appearing in court. The Hollywood Reporter said "not only does it reveal Brown to be even more vulgar than the tabloids suggest, but it manages at the same time to rob Houston of any last shreds of dignity."

Soon, Gordon joined the family. Houston never formally adopted him, but he became like a brother to Bobbi Kristina. And when Houston sought rehab in California in 2004 and divorced Brown in 2007, she kept the kids with her.

The pair called each other big brother and little sister back then. A month after Houston's death, however, they went public with their relationship. Houston's mother, Cissy, and sister-in-law Patricia, expressing concern that others would prey on the young woman's fortune, petitioned a judge to delay part of her inheritance, and Bobbi Kristina agreed.

The young couple's announcement of their marriage in January 2014 troubled Patricia Houston, who soon obtained a restraining order against Gordon, effective through April 2015.

'Jupiter Ascending' filmmakers unfazed by negative reactions

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It seems as though nothing can come between the Wachowskis.

When the filmmaker siblings are asked what incites the biggest spats between the duo best known for writing and directing "The Matrix" trilogy, Andy and Lana Wachowski provide a non-verbal response: The brother and sister sweetly clasp each other's hands and tap their contrasting noggins—Lana's fuchsia-hued dreadlocks, Andy's wrapped-up bald head—together.

"It's all just love," said Lana. "Is that too good to be believed?"

The Wachowskis are equally unflappable when it comes to criticisms of their recent work. They're undaunted by the weak box office for their 2012 time-jumping drama "Cloud Atlas" and their hyper 2008 cartoon adaptation "Speed Racer," and they're impervious to the torrent of pessimism swirling around their forthcoming space opera "Jupiter Ascending," out Friday.

"I've gotten a thicker skin when it comes to Internet searches on our art," said Andy matter-of-factly during a recent interview.

"Jupiter Ascending" centers on a toilet-scrubbing earthling (played by Mila Kunis) and her gravity-defying alien bodyguard (Channing Tatum). The pair becomes caught up in an epic case of intergalactic sibling rivalry, with Eddie Redmayne, Tuppence Middleton and Douglas Boothand portraying a royal space dynasty with nasty plans for humanity.

"I like things that are different," said Kunis, who plays titular character, Jupiter Jones. "You have to do things because you want to do them, not because someone else wants you to. If it fails, it doesn't matter. I did it because I wanted to work with the Wachowskis. If it doesn't do well, at the end of the day, I still got to work with great people, and I learned a lot."

The result is a mostly straightforward sci-fi romp—for the Wachowskis, anyway—that recalls space sagas like "Star Wars" and "Dune," as well as last year's "Guardians of the Galaxy." It also marks the first original, non-adapted film that the 49-year-old sister and 47-year-old-brother have written and directed since they said goodbye to "The Matrix" trilogy in 2003.

"There's directors like John Ford and Christopher Nolan who find a tone and stick with it throughout their careers," said Lana. "We're not like that. We're always looking for the range of what we see in life. That creates a tension between us and our audience because they don't know what to expect. It makes people excited, but it can also make for frustrated consumers."

The delay of "Jupiter Ascending" from a July to February release, as well as a surprise screening at Sundance where some audience members reportedly walked out, has raised questions whether the film will become a $175 million black hole for distributor Warner Bros. Lana likened the reshuffling of "Jupiter Ascending" to the studio's shifting of "Gravity" in 2013.

"The summer is built around familiarity," said Lana. "Many cultural critics who shape awareness for films are obsessed with sequels and derivative material. They wildly crave it. That kind of environment is hostile to originality. It only makes space for derivative material and rejects originality. I think Warner Bros. was uncomfortable with that environment."

For the Wachowskis, "Jupiter Ascending" isn't just another sci-fi flick. It's also an opportunity to stand up for fresh material at a time when studios are keener to greenlight sequels, reboots and adaptations. (Andy called the possibility of returning to "The Matrix" a "particularly repelling idea in these times.") It's yet another subject where the duo is united.

Suge Knight taken to hospital after court appearance

COMPTON, Calif. (AP)—Former rap music mogul Suge Knight pleaded not guilty Tuesday to murder and attempted murder charges before complaining of chest pain and being rushed to a hospital.

No further information about his condition was immediately available, Los Angeles County sheriff's Officer John Gardner said.

Knight's attorney David Kenner said he was on the way to the hospital to see his client but had no further details.

Knight wore orange jail attire at the morning court appearance where he entered not guilty pleas to four felonies, including hit-and-run charges, filed after the Death Row Records founder struck two men with his pickup truck last week.

Knight

The 49-year-old Knight could face life in prison if convicted.

Knight is accused of intentionally running down two men, including a friend, in Compton on Thursday. Knight's attorneys have said he hit the men by accident as Knight fled a vicious attack.

Knight is charged with killing Terry Carter, 55, and attempting to kill Cle "Bone" Sloan, 51, in a burger stand parking lot after an argument occurred at a separate site where the movie "Straight Outta Compton" about the rise of the rap group N.W.A. was being filmed.

Kenner, said his client is remorseful about Carter's death but that does not mean he's guilty of the crimes.

"He feels bad that somebody that he knew is deceased," Kenner said. "It's not his fault."

Michael R. Shapiro, an attorney who represents Sloan, said his client has a mangled left foot and some neurological issues and is recovering from his injuries under heavy security.

Knight was at the center of one of the most notorious rap conflicts of the 1990s, pitting Tupac Shakur against Biggie Smalls in an East Coast-West Coast rivalry.

Knight was sent to prison for nearly five years for badly beating a rival with Shakur at a Las Vegas hotel, just hours before Shakur was fatally shot while riding in Knight's car in 1996.

In the current case, Knight struck two men with his pickup in a Compton parking lot. The collision killed his friend Carter, a founder and owner of Heavyweight Records who was viewed as a community father figure who tried to mentor young men, said Doug Young, a friend and hip-hop music promoter. Sloan is an actor and film consultant.

Authorities said Knight visited the set for "Straight Outta Compton" and argued with Sloan, who was working at the location. Sheriff's deputies providing security asked Knight to leave.

What's in a name? For 'Birdman' maybe an Oscar

AP

This file photo released by Twentieth Century Fox shows Michael Keaton, left, as Riggan in a scene from the film, "Birdman, or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance" directed by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu.

NEW YORK (AP)—And the winner is ... a mouthful.

Though the full wingspan of the best-picture favorite at the Academy Awards is usually clipped down to simply "Birdman," the movie many think is destined to fly highest at the Oscars is officially titled "Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)." If it were to win, it would be the longest-titled best-picture winner, as well as the most grammatically dubious.

Oscar night may come down to not only what name is read from the night's final envelope, but also how the winning film is said. Should either name be called, writer-director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu isn't quibbling.

"Better the full title, but honestly I understand we have to be practical," said Inarritu of his preference in a recent interview. "It's more practical to say `Birdman.' That's fine by me."

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences recognizes the film's full title in all its colorful plumage, even if most multiplex marquees don't. The film's distributor, Fox Searchlight, has regularly fostered the natural shorthand while still honoring the artistic intentions of its filmmaker.

Since lengthy, oddly punctuated dual titles aren't exactly what marketers dream of, "Birdman" is how it's generally been promoted. But Fox Searchlight also presents the complete title on movie posters (albeit with the second title in much smaller type) and it urged critics reviewing the film to use the full title on first reference. (Inarritu acknowledges Searchlight has been "very cool" about his unorthodox title.)

The redundant parentheses of the title have annoyed more grammatically sensitive moviegoers. But the phrasing, of course, has a tradition: it takes after Stanley Kubrick's "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb," a best-picture nominee in 1965.

Speaking by phone during a day off from shooting "The Revenant," an early 1800s frontier thriller starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Inarritu said he loved "Dr. Strangelove," but that the title of "Birdman" isn't a direct ode to it. Instead, he called the title "a wink to the audience" that suggests the playfulness of his film, a comedy about an actor in paranoid crisis.

'Most Likely to Succeed': An education story for students

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—For all the hand-wringing about the American education system, for most families, the problems only become evident when it hits the home. At least that was the case for director Greg Whiteley ("Mitt") who saw his vivacious, bright and engaged daughter nearly give up on the system in fourth grade.

"She decided that was it. She sat me down and had a very serious talk. She said: `Look Dad, I just don't think I need to go to school anymore,'" Whiteley said.

He and his wife shrugged it off as a typical phase of adolescence and kept their daughter in school, but then things worsened. "As I forced her to go to school and just complete these math worksheets, I could see that something was dying in her," he said.

In a somewhat fortuitous coincidence, around this time, Whiteley met longtime venture capitalist Ted Dintersmith, who then introduced him to "The Global Achievement Gap" author Tony Wagner.

Whiteley's mission became clear: The problem was in the system, not the student.

In his film "Most Likely to Succeed," Whiteley focuses in on an arbitrarily antiquated American education system that was designed for a very different economy and workforce.

"We're setting ourselves up for national disaster," Dintersmith said.

"For all of human history, the primary focus of education has been about acquiring more knowledge," said Wagner in the film. "Today, content is ubiquitous. It's free. It's on every Internet-connected device."

Drawing on a combination of expert opinions and an examination of the history of U.S. education, Whiteley finds hope in one San Diego, Calif., high school: High Tech High, which focuses on project-based learning and not just content memorization.

At Sundance, Dintersmith and Whiteley attended a community screening of the film with 500 area students. Much to their surprise, all were engaged.

"We were worried they'd be bored. Documentaries don't usually resonate with high school students. But watching from the back, no cellphone ever came out, no kid left to go to the bathroom, no side conversations happened," Dintersmith said.

When the film concluded, the audience then engaged in a 45-minute video conference Q&A with the High Tech High class that the film focuses on. "It looked like every hand was up," Dintersmith said.

"In talking to the kids after the screening, it's clear they're desperate for this film," Whiteley said.

"Our strategy from the beginning has been to make a movie as viewed and as powerful as `An Inconvenient Truth' but not botch the follow-up," Dintersmith said. The filmmakers are hoping to inspire community screenings and show the film throughout the country later this year.

Talk of long-ago divorce can bring present-day pain

DEAR ABBY: Would you please remind your readers that people who have been through an awful divorce DO NOT want to hear anything about their ex? We don't want to hear—again and again—how much better the ex did in the settlement than we did. We don't want to hear that the ex was seen with his girlfriend the other day.

I have a friend who tells me every time I speak with her how much better he made out in the settlement than I did. People also need to realize that even though the divorce was years ago, it still hurts.

HURTING IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR HURTING: I'm passing along your message. However, when it first happened, you should have told the woman to drop the subject because it was hurtful. If you didn't, please do that. But if you did say it and your request was disregarded, recognize that this person isn't a "friend," that she probably gets a kick out of causing you pain or aggravation, and you should avoid her.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm 17 and adopted. I have a wonderful new family, but a very dark past. I was beaten every day for seven years and was bulimic for five. The abuse finally ended when my stepfather went to jail for trying to murder my mother and me. I was bullied in school and went home to more abuse.

Now, even though I'm out of the situation, I still get scared when people yell at me, or at school when someone raises their hands like they are about to hit me. Everyone tells me I need to "grow up," but how am I supposed to do that when I'm still scared of my past?

CAN'T GET PAST IT

DEAR CAN'T GET PAST IT: After the amount of trauma you have experienced, it may take help from a licensed mental health professional to get past what was done to you. If your family is unable to provide it, discuss this with a counselor at school and ask for help, because the counselor may be able to refer you to someone.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My adult son and his wife have had a dog for two years. I do not want a dog in my house, but I also don't want to prevent them from visiting (they live six hours away). We have tried keeping "Puddles" in the basement, but she whined all night, and my son ended up sleeping on the basement floor with her.

They think I'm going to give in because she's so cute, but I don't like little animals running, jumping and yapping. (OK, I'm high-strung, and holidays make it worse.) My husband doesn't support me and tries to sneak Puddles in when I'm not looking.

This is not fair! I'm the one who keeps the house nice, but I love my son. Any suggestions?

PARTICULAR IN OHIO

DEAR PARTICULAR: Yes, your son should find a pet sitter or board Puddles for the time when he visits you. And if necessary, offer to pay for it. That way the poor animal won't be isolated in unfamiliar surroundings and will have companionship, you'll have peace of mind and your son will get a good night's sleep.

■■■

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

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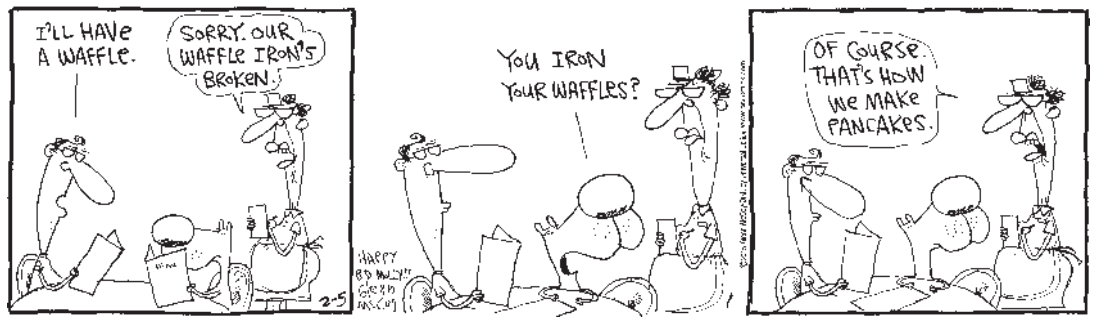
By Bryan Basset

ADAM? IT'S 3 AM. YOU GONNA WRITE ALL NIGHT?
I DON'T REALLY HAVE A CHOICE IF I'M GONNA GET THIS IN BY SATURDAY.
TYPE TYPE
CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING?
A NEW BRAIN. THIS ONE'S SPENT.
TIP TAP
HOW ABOUT A SHOULDER RUB?
PERFECT. AND IF I CLOSE MY EYES, LET ME KNOW WHAT I'M TYPING.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Monumental
5 Fool
8 Air pollution
12 Catherine — -Jones
13 Puncturing tool
14 Havana's land
15 Spool
16 Favorable vote
17 Sahara-like
18 Factions in Risk
20 Fail miserably
22 Aegis
26 Greek letter
29 Consume
30 Id counterpart
31 New Mexico art colony
32 Ostrich's cousin
33 Capri, e.g.
34 Tin Man's need
35 Litter member
36 The Plaza, e.g.
37 Estimate of future possibilities
40 At hand
41 Concealed
45 "Yeah, right"
47 Pi follower
49 Nil
50 Rounded ottoman
51 Listener
52 Satanic
53 Active
54 Pigs' digs
55 Trig term

DOWN
1 Old Testament book
2 Equal
3 Thing
4 Baghdad bigwigs
5 Permission
6 Overwhelm
7 Level of achievement
8 Meager
9 Most obscured
10 Japanese sash
11 Wander
19 Historical period
21 Performance
23 Lure
24 Look lasciviously
25 Yuletide rendition
26 On
27 Den
28 "To thine own self be true" speaker
32 Swindles
33 Charges electrically
35 Cribbage scorer
36 Weeder's need
38 Moment
39 Soap brand
42 Jeans maker Strauss
43 Activist Brockovich
44 Apportion (out)
45 Police alert initials
46 Old French coin
48 Bella Abzug trademark

Solution time: 25 mins.

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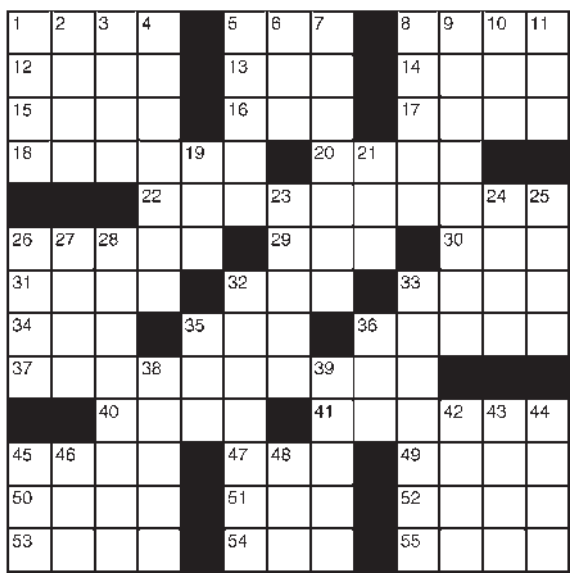
Yesterday's answer 2-5



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Darren Criss, 28; Michael Sheen, 46; Jennifer Jason Leigh, 53; Barbara Hershey, 67.

Happy Birthday: Take a practical approach to partnerships and avoid the pitfalls that can happen if you try to do too much for others. Imbalance will be the enemy, making it vital for you to delegate jobs to everyone in a fair and responsible manner. Much of your success will depend on how you handle people in your personal and professional life. Your numbers are 3, 11, 18, 26, 32, 45, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't mess with people who can influence your future. Do whatever it takes to get along without compromising your integrity. Listen attentively to others. Being accommodating will help you get what you want in the end. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Get ready to make a crucial move that will help you establish your direction and your position. Forget about what has happened in the past and remain focused on what you want. It's up to you to improve your life. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Listen to what others have to say. Ignoring good advice will result in a mistake that you'll regret. Anger and aggression will not solve problems, but practical solutions will. Be the bigger person and you will make a difference. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Partnerships will take on a new direction. Observe what others do and say and you will be able to make wise decisions. Traditional means and methods are not always the best route. Consider every angle and proceed with confidence. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Money will come from an unusual source. The decisions you make regarding finances, health and legal matters are best based on facts and figures. A past partner will try to influence you. Be strong and do what's best for you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Don't let your heart rule your head. You will be set back by comments and criticism. You'll have to decide whether what is said is constructive or meddling. An outsider is likely to see your situation much clearer than you do. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Take the path that is free of conflict. Problems at work will arise if you have been mixing business with pleasure. You are best to make adjustments to a relationship that is crossing boundaries and could make you look bad. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Don't believe everything you hear. Listening to someone's boasting may be intriguing, but it will not benefit you in the end. Focus on your own ideas and plans and you will make progress. Romance will improve your day. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): All eyes will be on you. Keep a low profile and don't make promises you cannot deliver. Emotional problems will escalate if you aren't honest about the way you feel. Protect your emotional and physical well-being. Use your head. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Go after your dreams, hopes and wishes. Love and romance are elevated, and a commitment can be made. The more you do to please someone you care about, the easier it will be to get your way. An agreement will pay off. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Sort through your possessions and get rid of what's no longer relevant. Selling unwanted items will bring in a little extra cash, giving you incentive to purge more and spend less in the future. Positive change is heading your way. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Observe what everyone around you is doing before you make a move. Someone you least expect will set you up for a fall. Don't let anyone take you for granted. Embrace the changes that are necessary and inevitable. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are determined and dedicated. You are practical and a perfectionist.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

9				5				3
			8		6			
		6			3	5		
	8	9					6	
5			7		4			1
	3					7	2	
		1	4			9		
			2		9			
6				7				4

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	6	7	4	2	5	8	9	3
4	5	9	6	3	8	2	1	7
8	3	2	1	7	9	5	6	4
7	9	6	3	1	2	4	8	5
3	1	4	8	5	6	7	2	9
5	2	8	7	9	4	1	3	6
9	7	3	2	4	1	6	5	8
6	4	1	5	8	3	9	7	2
2	8	5	9	6	7	3	4	1

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/04

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SOCKS KEEP MY FEET WARM **Solution: 8 letters**

B	E	L	S	T	E	P	P	U	P	O	M	P	O	M
L	R	L	O	G	S	K	N	U	S	P	I	N	K	D
U	E	I	P	O	E	E	L	P	O	T	E	E	F	E
E	T	E	G	R	W	L	O	L	C	T	A	F	E	T
C	N	S	R	H	U	R	F	H	K	A	W	L	R	T
O	I	E	A	P	T	P	I	H	S	E	O	O	L	I
L	W	L	Y	S	I	R	B	R	I	W	H	R	S	N
O	N	Y	Y	L	G	A	E	E	T	S	S	A	T	K
R	E	T	F	R	M	T	R	T	E	H	E	L	O	H
F	R	S	F	O	C	E	Ⓢ	G	S	S	I	H	D	N
U	D	O	H	A	M	A	A	Ⓞ	Y	E	M	C	A	E
L	L	A	R	H	E	A	V	Y	Ⓕ	L	Y	E	K	N
D	I	A	S	T	R	I	P	E	S	Ⓣ	E	L	L	I
R	H	A	D	U	L	T	S	N	I	F	E	L	O	L
C	C	L	O	T	H	I	N	G	R	E	E	N	P	P

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Yesterday's Answer: Stratovolcano

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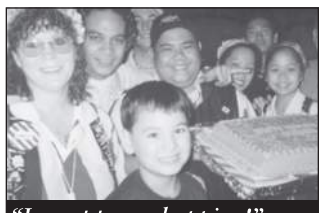

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Saipan Tribune

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Examination Announcement Number: LB-JVA-15-001 **Position: Legislative Assistant**
PL-UNGRADED: $1,148.36 B/W **Opening Date: January 26, 2015**
The salary will be determined by the qualification of the appointee **Closing Date: February 9, 2015**
Location: Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building (CNMI Legislature), Capitol Hill, Saipan

General Duties:
- Drafts legislative documents including but not limited to resolutions, committee reports, and letters, as requested by the Chairperson of the Committee to which he or she is assigned to;
- Attends legislative session and committee meetings as requested by the Chairperson of his or her assigned committee;
- Performs investigative and legislative research and analysis;
- Prepares reports and studies including preparation of letters, legislation, and related documents as requested by members of his or her assigned respective legislative house;
- Maintains a reasonable record of all tasks assigned by his or her immediate supervisor Chairperson of the Committee or other members of his or her assigned respective legislative house and such record is subject to review upon request; and
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Qualifications and Requirements:
- **Possess four years relevant work experience or a minimum of an AA or AS degree or higher from a United States accredited institution of higher education with one year of legislative work experience;**
- **Possess ample knowledge of the legislative process;**
- **Excellent research, analytical, and strong writing skills; and**
- **Ability to produce results within limited time frames and work under pressure on a daily basis.**

Education requirements may be substituted with related experience

Education and training claimed under item 19(A) through 19(F) of the Application for Employment must be substantiated by a copy of an official diploma and/or certificate. **Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. All applicants may be subject to further interviews and examinations(i.e. writing assignment) to determine qualification.**

Employment application may be accessed at www.cnmileg.gov.mp or may be picked up at the Office of the Director of the Legislative Bureau located at the Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building (CNMI Legislature), Capitol Hill, Saipan. Completed application and police clearance may be submitted to the Office of the Director or may be mailed, postmarked no later than the closing date to the Office of the Director; Legislative Bureau; P.O. Box 500586; Saipan, MP 96950. No telephone inquiries.

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Warriors ride hot first-half stretch to beat Kings, 121-96

AP

Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (30) is helped back onto the court by fans during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Sacramento Kings on Friday, Jan. 23, 2015, in Oakland, Calif.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Pick a category: Defense. Shooting. Ball movement. Efficiency. Togetherness.

In four games this season, the Golden State Warriors and Sacramento Kings showed in just about every way how much of a difference there is between the NBA's Northern California clubs.

Stephen Curry had 23 points and nine assists, and the Warriors rode a 23-0 spurt in the first half to beat the Kings 121-96 on Tuesday night, sweeping the season series for the second straight year.

"They want to be all machos over there, but we just come out here and play our game. We always come out with a win," said Warriors reserve Marreese Speights, who finished with 17 points and eight rebounds before fouling out.

Golden State shut down Sacramento for more than seven minutes at the end of the first quarter and start of the second quarter to take an 18-point lead. The Warriors went ahead by 21 at the half and 25 in the third quarter, then held off a brief Kings comeback.

Things got physical and feisty, at times, on the court. But none of it seemed to faze the visitors.

The Warriors had 33 assists and 11 turnovers, while the Kings had 17 assists and 18 turnovers. Golden State outshot Sacramento 50.5 percent to 44.3 percent and outscored Sacramento's bench 61 to 12.

"I love the box score. I love having a lot of different guys scoring and not having all the points concentrated on a few guys," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "It just makes us hard to guard."

Sacramento snapped its eight-game losing streak with a win at Indiana on Saturday and had hoped to carry the momentum home.

Instead, about the only thing the Kings accomplished was quieting Klay Thompson—who had 14 points—after he scored an NBA-record 37 points in the third quarter and finished with 52 in Golden State's last game against Sacramento on Jan. 23.

DeMarcus Cousins had 26 points and 11 rebounds, and Rudy Gay scored 20 for the Kings, who rallied within 11 late in the third quarter before the Warriors regrouped.

"Basically, their bench came in and did a great job," Cousins said. "They pushed the game ahead and made it tough for our whole team."

It was quite a way for the NBA-leading Warriors (38-8) to begin a stretch of four games in five nights, including three on the road. In all, five of their last six games before the All-Star break are away from home.

Golden State fell behind 22-14 with 4:43 remaining in the first quarter before smothering Sacramento (17-30) for a stunningly prolonged stretch.

The Warriors held the Kings scoreless for more than seven minutes and without a field goal for more than 8 1/2 minutes. Sacramento missed 10 consecutive shots and committed five turnovers until Jason Thompson's short jumper with 9:38 left in the second quarter.

The Warriors rolled into the half up 63-42, kept their pace-and-space attack moving after the break and moved ahead by 25 points in the third quarter.

Cousins helped Sacramento slice that lead to 11 late in the third before the Warriors got hot again. Curry hit a 3-pointer in the closing seconds of the quarter and the Warriors built back a big lead.

Pistons 108, Heat 91

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, D.J. Augustin had 25 points and 13 assists as the Detroit Pistons closed the first quarter on a 25-1 run, going on to beat the Miami Heat.

Chris Bosh scored 34 points, including 21 in the third quarter, but nobody else provided much help offensively for Miami, which was still without injured star Dwyane Wade. It was the first time in Bosh's five seasons with the Heat that they lost a regular-season game with him scoring at least 30 points. They had been 17-0.

Andre Drummond had 14 points and 14 rebounds for the Pistons, and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 18. Greg Monroe had 12 points and nine rebounds.

Detroit is now 2 1/2 games behind Miami and Charlotte, which occupy the last two playoff spots in the Eastern Conference.

Celtics 108, Knicks 97

In New York, Avery Bradley scored 26 points and Jared Sullinger added 22 as the Boston Celtics snapped a three-game losing streak.

Bradley shot 11 for 14 from the field for the Celtics, who rediscovered their offense after a lineup change that put rookie Marcus Smart in the backcourt with Bradley. Smart made consecutive 3-pointers during the Celtics' 14-2 start, and they never trailed.

Sullinger finished with nine rebounds and six assists. Boston had been limited to just 86.7 points per game during its skid, including a season-low 75 in an eight-point loss to Miami on Sunday.

Carmelo Anthony scored 21 points for the Knicks, who had won five of seven during their best stretch of the season.

76ers 105, Nuggets 98

In Philadelphia, Hollis Thompson scored a career-high 23 points to lead the Philadelphia 76ers to the victory over the slumping Denver Nuggets.

Michael Carter-Williams had 15 points, 12 assists and eight rebounds and Robert Covington added 17 points for the improving 76ers, who won their third straight home game for the first time since March 2013.

Danilo Gallinari scored 22 points to pace the Nuggets, who dropped their 10th in 11 games.

The 76ers were the laughingstock of the league while starting the season with 17 straight losses. But they have won three of five, with the two losses in competitive games on the road against Eastern Conference contenders Atlanta and Cleveland.

Trail Blazers 103, Jazz 102

In Portland, Ore., with Robin Lopez's return, the Trail Blazers seemed more at ease. Even a late threat from the Utah Jazz seemed surmountable.

"I think everybody was just more comfortable knowing he was out there," said guard Damian Lillard, who had 25 points as Portland held off the Jazz 103-102.

Lopez fractured his right hand in a Dec. 15 game against San Antonio and missed 23 games. The 7-foot-center was badly missed.

Lopez's return, and the victory, came at the right time for the Blazers, who had lost three straight and five of their last six going into Tuesday night's game.

LaMarcus Aldridge finished with 22 points and 11 rebounds. Lopez had 11 points and six rebounds, held to just over 25 minutes on the floor.

Gordon Hayward finished with 27 points for the Jazz, who were coming off 110-100 victory over the Western Conference-leading Warriors.

SIDEBAR

Pacers' Bird hoping to see George back on floor this season

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Larry Bird isn't putting any constraints on Paul George's recovery.

In fact, the Pacers president of basketball operations is hoping George will make it onto the court this season. Just six months after the two-time All-Star gruesomely broke his right leg in two places, Bird told reporters that if doctors clear George to play, he should.

"I always say if the player is ready to play, he's got to play," Bird said Wednesday. "We're not going to hold him back if he's able to go out there and play. I think it's important because when you're out like that, you lose something. He's going to get beat up, he's going to get knocked around, he's not going to look good, but I still think it's important, if he's able to play, he should be out there."

Bird said doctors initially told him that it would take seven months for the leg bone to fully heal. If that timeline still holds, George could conceivably be ready for a return from the Aug. 1 injury sometime next month.

Being cleared may not be enough. Coach Frank Vogel acknowledged that getting into game shape and getting back in sync with his teammates could add another month or two to the rehab process, possibly delaying George's return until next season—the expectation all along.

George is expected to talk with reporters on Thursday, his first public comments since late November. After Bird spoke, George issued a one-word Tweet: "March?!"

He has steadily increased his activity during practices, though Vogel declined to say what he's exactly been doing. He also has been traveling with his teammates on some road trips.

While those are signs of progress, they are not necessarily an indication of an imminent return or whether George is anywhere close to his pre-injury form.

"I think you've just got to be smart with it," Vogel said. "Like Larry said, if the doctors say OK, then I think he should be ready to go."

Indiana (17-32) certainly could use George on the court.

Though the Pacers are still ranked in the top third of the league defensively, they have been inconsistent. Offensively, the Pacers' struggles have been even worse and additional injuries have sapped Indiana of more scoring punch. Bird said he expected this team to come together by now.

Yet they are just 4 1/2 games out of the final playoff spot in the East and still have playoff visions. George's return could help.

"I want to win and that's been my goal, to try to get into the playoffs," Bird said. "Hopefully, down the road, we'll see where Paul's at. We still have no idea whether he's coming back or not, but it seems like every week he's getting better and better. If we do have an opportunity to get into the playoffs and he can get some games under his belt and get ready to go next year."

George's absence and the Pacers' continual woes have prompted speculation that Bird could break up the core of the two-time Eastern Conference runner-ups before the Feb. 19 trade deadline. The two biggest trade chips Indiana has are veteran power forward David West and two-time All-Star center Roy Hibbert.

Bird acknowledged he will listen to offers and will try to help improve the team upon George's return, whenever that is, but does not appear to be in a rush to make any moves.

Vogel isn't pleading for changes, either.

"I like the group that we have and I would love to come back with West, Hibbert, George (Hill) at the one, fill in a couple of spots and make another run at it," Vogel said. "Obviously, Roy and David have player options, but I'm pretty confident they'll be back."

Which leaves just one question: When will George be back?

"I have no clue whether he's going to play or not," Bird said. "But if he gets healthy and they say he can play and he wants to play, we'll put him out there."

Days later, fans struggle with Seahawks' Super Bowl loss

AP

In this image taken from video provided by Norb Caoili, Seattle Seahawks' fan Norb Caoili grabs his head in the final moments of the Super Bowl as the Seahawks lose to the New England Patriots Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015, in Glendale, Ariz.

SEATTLE (AP)—As shocking as it was, the Seattle Seahawks' last-minute loss to the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl Sunday was probably not even the worst loss in the city's sports history.

Seattle did lose an entire NBA franchise, after all, when the SuperSonics up and moved to Oklahoma City. At least the Seahawks will be playing again next season.

■■■

BOSTON (AP)—Patriots quarterback Tom Brady says he "would love to" give the truck he got for winning his third Super Bowl MVP to defensive back Malcolm Butler.

Butler made the game-saving interception at the goal line in the final minute of Sunday night's 28-24 victory over the Seattle Seahawks.

Butler was an undrafted rookie free agent. Brady is a two-time NFL MVP and four-time Super Bowl champion.

Brady said on WEEI radio in Boston on Tuesday he wants to see that Butler gets the truck. Said Brady: "I'm going to figure out how to make that work."

■■■

But the grief, anger and bewilderment felt by many Seahawks fans nevertheless show only mild signs of abating, even days later. Many say they're certain the decision to pass from the 1-yard line—instead of handing off to bruising running back Marshawn Lynch—will forever haunt the Northwest the way previous sporting gaffes defined other cities.

"I'll be 90 years old and still thinking about this game," said Norb Caoili, a longtime season-ticket holder from Renton. "The history of sports is defined by moments like this, where heroes rise and save the day, or where teams collapse on the biggest stages. It's always going to be a part of the fabric of Seattle, and that's tough to swallow."

Caoili, 45, is the force behind Norb-Cam, a YouTube channel that features videos of himself—wearing a green wig, Seahawks headband, and blue-and-green face paint—reacting to the action during Seahawks games. The videos have been viewed an improbable number of times, making him a prominent voice among Hawks fans.

For him, the way the Seahawks lost is what makes it so tough: Moments earlier, the team seemed on the brink of a miraculous victory, with receiver Jermaine Kearse making an inconceivable, bobbling, falling catch despite great coverage from Patriots rookie Malcolm Butler. It was a gift from the football gods, "divine intervention" that signaled a certain Seahawks victory, he said.

Lynch's subsequent run, bringing the ball to the 1 with the clock ticking down, only fortified that impression.

Caoili's video from the Super Bowl—tickets $2,700 apiece, airfare and lodging $1,400—shows him chanting a mantra for Lynch to get the ball: "Give it to him again, give it to him again, give it to him again."

The decision to pass, then, becomes not just "the worst play call I've seen in the history of football," as Hall of Fame running back Emmitt Smith described it, but an affront to the gods, a sort of cardinal sin punished by instant karma: Butler's goal-line interception, and New England's fourth championship of the Tom Brady-Bill Belichick era.

It was an epic failure, akin to the ground ball through Bill Buckner's legs that helped sink the 1986 Red Sox or the "wide right" field goal attempt in 1991 that proved to be the first of four consecutive Super Bowl losses for the Buffalo Bills.

"Emotionally, it would have been better to lose 43-8," Caoili said, referring to the score by which the Seahawks beat Denver in last year's Super Bowl. "There's nothing worse than having it in your hand and losing it all."

Caoili and other fans said that even if the loss sticks with the team, and the region, a few more Super Bowl championships could take the edge off. Odds-makers have Seattle 5-to-1 favorites to win it all next year.

In the Seattle suburb of Renton, where the Seahawks are headquartered, fans left balloons and signs for the team in a memorial thanking them for a great season. "We still believe," said one.

Vu Le, a 33-year-old Vietnamese immigrant who runs a Seattle nonprofit, knew nothing about professional sports when he started cheering for the Seahawks during the team's Super Bowl run last year. On his blog, he tried to draw lessons from the loss for the nonprofit world, spelling out what he called Seattle's "stages of grief": "Denial, Righteous Anger, Hot Yoga, Organic Juice Cleanse, Bargaining at a Farmer's Market, Composting, Existential Despair, Biking to Happy Hour, and Acceptance . of Marijuana."

Le said Tuesday he doesn't regret getting on the Seahawks bandwagon.

"When you care about something, you risk getting your heart just squished," he said. "But when they win, like last year, it was amazing."

Kris Brannon, a local superfan best known as "Sonics Guy," has been wearing his green-and-gold and his impressive afro to events around the Northwest in the years since the team became the Oklahoma City Thunder in 2008. He put the Super Bowl loss in perspective.

"I wish the Sonics had a chance to lose a championship," he said.

Seahawks' decision to pass latest call to create controversy

By ARNIE STAPLETON
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

The Seattle Seahawks had both the Lombardi Trophy and greatness in their grasp with 36 inches and 26 seconds to go.

They watched their coronation as a modern day dynasty slip away with the decision not to put the ball in Marshawn Lynch's hands.

In what some are viewing as one of the great miscalculations in sports history, offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell, backed by head coach Pete Carroll, called for a pass play, leaving Lynch—and ultimately the rest of the Seahawks—stunningly empty-handed.

When Malcolm Butler stepped in front of Ricardo Lockette and picked off Russell Wilson's pass, the undrafted and previously unheralded rookie sealed New England's 28-24 Super Bowl win.

It also added Bevell and Carroll to the long list of sportsmen whose decisions backfired so spectacularly so as to haunt and taunt the also-rans and their crestfallen fans.

Some choices that stand out for their deleterious results:

■■■

MEADOWLANDS MIRACLE: In the final seconds of a 1978 NFL game, all the New York Giants had to do was take a knee and they had the Philadelphia Eagles beaten. But they inexplicably called a running play and quarterback Joe Pisarcik botched the handoff. Defensive back Herman Edwards scooped up the loose ball and scored the winning touchdown.

■■■

POOPED PEDRO: Just five outs from guiding Boston to the World Series, manager Grady Little left an exhausted Pedro Martinez in Game 7 of the 2003 AL Championship Series. Martinez had just given up three consecutive hits and was clearly done. After Little returned to the dugout without his ace, Jorge Posada hit the game-tying double and the Red Sox went on to lose. The curse lived on for another year.

■■■

BEST BENCHED: While Al Michaels was shouting, "Do you believe in miracles? Yes!" Soviet hockey fans on Feb. 22, 1980, were asking, "Why isn't Vladislav Tretiak between the pipes? No!" Soviet coach Victor Tikhonov benched the world's best goaltender with the score tied at 2 after the first period. The American team made up of mostly college kids capitalized against backup Vladimir Myshkin to beat the mighty Soviets 4-3 in the "Miracle on Ice."

■■■

VEXED VAN de VELDE: Needing just a double bogey to win the 1999 British Open, Frenchman Jean Van de Velde decided not to play things conservatively and triple bogeyed the 18th hole, forcing a three-way playoff with Paul Lawrie and Justin Leonard that he lost. The lasting image from golf's biggest implosion was Van de Velde slipping off his socks and shoes and stepping into the knee-deep water to reclaim his third shot

■■■

FAB FIVE FAIL: Chris Webber's Michigan Wolverines trailed North Carolina 73-71 in the closing seconds of the 1993 NCAA men's basketball championship when he found himself double-teamed and called a timeout. Because Michigan had no timeouts left, Webber was assessed a technical foul and the Tar Heels cruised to the title.

Super Bowl champions return to another New England snowstorm

BOSTON (AP)—The New England Patriots arrived safely in snowbound Massachusetts on Monday night, following their dramatic 28-24 Super Bowl victory over the Seattle Seahawks in Arizona.

The team landed at Boston's Logan International Airport just before 7:30 p.m. local time and retweeted a message from running back Shane Vereen: "Boston! Your Champs just got home!! #hellosnow #itscoldbutourtrophieskeepuswarm."

Fans waiting in chilly temperatures outside Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, south of Boston, waited for hours just to catch a glimpse of their beloved team.

The team sat in charter buses at the airport for nearly two hours while crews unloaded their equipment and bags from the plane. By about 10 p.m., the caravan, led by a state police escort, reached the stadium.

Players returned to a region weathering another major workday snowstorm that brought over a foot of new snow on top of nearly 3 feet already on the ground in places. Coach Bill Belichick and several players greeted fans braving the cold as they arrived at the stadium.

Defensive end Chandler Jones tweeted: "Saw all of those @Patriots fans out there standing in the cold at Gillette just now! I had to come show love!Love all of you guys! #GoPats!"

The players were expected to clean out their lockers and pick up their cars before the night was over.

To be sure, not all the Patriots made the return journey.

Tight end Rob Gronkowski flew to Los Angeles on Monday for an appearance on ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live!"

Boston had initially planned a victory parade through downtown on Tuesday, but that celebration has been pushed back to Wednesday morning because of the weather.

PIC schools Docomo in business caging

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Pacific Islands Club Saipan taught Docomo Pacific a thing or two about basketball in the lone game of Tuesday night's opening of the 2015 Inter-Commercial Business Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

PIC used a strong first-quarter attack in cruising to a lopsided 122-52 victory against Docomo to send a strong message of its intention in claiming the title in the inaugural cage league.

Sam Roscow, Bart Demapan, and Jack Aranda combined for 21 points as PIC quickly zoomed to a 34-8 lead after 10 minutes of play and never looked back.

The game was so one-sided that PIC's lead ballooned to 40 at the half and 55 after three quarters before settling for that 70-point winning margin.

PIC even enjoyed a whopping 24-8 edge in steals and 14-2 in assists while slightly ahead in rebounds, 34-28.

Seven PIC players finished in double figures with Ham Hambros leading the bunch with 21 points, 5 rebounds, 2 steals, and 1 assist, while James Abuy provided support with 19 markers, 4 steals, and 2 assists.

Roscow bullied his way inside to end up with 16 points, 8 rebounds, 3 assists, and 3 steals, while former Shirley's Coffee Shop teammates Erick Dela Rosa and Sean Rabasto combined for 26 markers, 9 rebounds, 4 assists, and 4 steals.

Darwin Barbo scattered 12 points to go with his 5 rebounds, 1 assist, and one steal, while Aranda tallied 11 markers, 2 rebounds and a game-high 6 steals.

Tony Diaz led Docomo's losing cause with 28 points, while Jason Hayes was the only other Docomo player to finish in twin digits with 10 markers. R.J. Mendiola only scored 2 points but grabbed a team-high 7 rebounds.

Action continues today with Saipan Ice taking on JP World-Mobil in the 6:30pm opener, while IT&E takes on Marpac-Budweiser in the 8pm nightcap.

Matches next Tuesday, Feb. 10, will have the Public School System battling Saipan Stevedore in the 6:30pm first game, while PIC shoots for its second straight win when it takes on Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan at 8pm.

PIC 122 – Hambros 21, Abuy 19, Roscow 16, Dela Rosa 13, Rabasto 13, Barbo 12, Aranda 11, Demapan 9, Bartolo 4, Quitugua 4.

Docomo 52 – Diaz 28, Hayes 10, Sablan 4, Alvarez 2, Guerrero 2, Mendiola 2, Sanciangco 2.

Scoring by quarters: 34-8, 62-22, 93-38, 122-52.

ROSELYN MONROYO
Pacific Island Club's Erick Dela Rosa, 8, goes for a layup in their opening game against Docomo Pacific in the 2015 Inter-Commercial Business Basketball League last Tuesday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CNMI

From Page 28

The long kick dropped ahead of a Japan Soccer College player, but Perez outsprinted him and got the possession. After passing one defender, Perez came face to face with goalie Akin Yamashita, who rushed into the former's direction, trying to catch the ball. However, Perez was quick to shift gears, passing the ball to his left to avoid Yamashita.

Yamashita went down after his futile defensive stop and was nowhere in sight when Perez, despite the difficult angle he was into, used his left foot to cross the ball in.

"At the time, all I can think of is keep dribbling and passing the ball. When I saw him (goalie) coming at me, I knew I had to shift directions. I managed to evade him, but it was really a difficult angle, so I had to use my left foot to get the ball in. My right foot is my primary so it was really hard to get that in, but fortunately I did it. Thanks to Scott for the pass and for my teammates for playing tough defense on the other end," said Perez, who drove in the dagger in the 63rd minute.

He scored his first goal in the 25th after an errant pass from the visiting team, as he also outsprinted his defender and went for a forward shot. Two minutes later Japan got its first goal to end the first half in a deadlock.

In the second half, both teams were pretty even on possessions with Japan Soccer College getting two free kicks early in that period, but failed to cash in. The visiting squad also made some corner kicks, but the Blue Ayuyus' defense was always there to frustrate the visiting squad.

On offense, the CNMI bets just waited for the breaks with Perez often loitering past the center, waiting for passes from his teammates. On at least three occasions, his teammates managed to get him the ball, but Perez was either hounded by a phalanx of defenders or Yamashita stepped in to spoil the party.

The needed break finally came near the 20-minute mark of the second half as Japan Soccer College's defense was concentrated on the other side of the pitch, leaving Perez open for a foot race against only one defender before the last line of defense—Yamashita—also failed to stop the CNMI forward.

Joining Perez and Kim on the winning squad were goalies Joshua Galarion and Chris Aninzo, Evan Belcher, Saixian Bagsic, Carlon Cruzat, Enrico Del Rosario, Joel Fruit, Kennedy Izuka, Jehn Joyner, Won Jun Kim, Yoshi and Kenneth Mafnas, John Masga, Dakota Hall, Reniel and Ryan Relucio, Greg Sbalan, John Taisacan, Ryu Tanzawa, Glenn Vidal, and Jireh Yobech.

Northern Mariana Island Football Association technical director Kiyoshi Sekiguchi coached the Blue Ayuyus with Jershwin Angeles assisting him.

"It was a good game as we were able to capitalize on some opportunities given to us. Sean used his speed advantage in those plays and our defense held on," Sekiguchi said.

Sekiguchi will also lead a selection of players that will play another exhibition game against the same Japan Soccer College crew today at 5:30pm at the Oleai pitch.

Meanwhile, the visiting team raffled off jerseys to spectators. The winners list is as follows: Jera Castillo, Cosmos Kim, Jasper Vandermaas, Tiana Q., Pin Shankweiler, Taka Borja, Kirt Andon, Kosuke Sato, Christy Villaflor, Erlinda Shimizu, Raphael Zapanta, Wes Bogdan, Seung Mock Yuu, Jenny-Ann V. C. , Lovely Loyola, Julie Ann, Carla Ballesteros, James Ermitanio, Lyka Sally, Ras Saimon, JC Piring, JC Ferrari, Reniel Relucio, Camille Limon, Leisha Sally, Rizza Relucio, Jack Phan, Daniell Pablo, Francisco Sablan, Gillian Villagomez, Neeka Atalig, Risa Sekiguchi, Eric Abragan, Thecel Minor, Dindo Pablo, Ann McMahon , Won-Kwan, Christel Aninzo, Jude Tengco, Mary Joy Aniana, Mycah Yobech, Tommy Kim, Amanda Agulto, Piling Terlaje , F. Calayag, Ichiro Borja, Jose C. , Karleen, Cheska Bucalig, and Ciaralyn Apostol.

Prizes can be claimed at the pitch today and winners must present their tickets.

UFO basketball meeting tonight

Coaches or representatives of interested teams that will compete in the 2015 United Filipino Organization basketball league are requested to attend tonight's meeting at 6pm at Jhem's restaurant in Garapan.

Organizers of the annual basketball league said they are limiting the numbers of teams in each of the four divisions—Under-15, U20, 21-over, and 40-over—to eight.

The opening date is set on Feb. 22, Sunday, with assembly time at 7am at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. The parade of teams will follow.

Competing squads are allowed to form a 12-player roster while registration fees are $350 in U15, $400 in U20, $600 in Over-21, and $550 in Over-40.

The opening games will be chosen by raffle with the U15 the first match and each followed by contests in the Over-40, U21, and Over-21.

For more information, call Bong Malasarte at 287-5525, Pepe Crisostomo at 483-1997, Edward Manalili at 483-4337, Marlon Regaton at 989-9836, or Pete Reyes at 989-7317, or email at ugo.saipan@gmail.com. ***(Jon Perez)***

MANGLONA

From Page 28

then ruled the Absolute (open weight) division in the United Grappling Federation-organized event.

"I changed my fight name to Maga'Lahi because I wanted to always represent our people and the Marianas. Because I just felt that my old nickname just didn't have any meaning," said Manglona in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

The Saipan-born fighter, who has a purple belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, said that he had to work hard to win his two gold medals as the competition was not easy.

"By no means the competition was easy. Every competitor I faced was very skilled and had his own fighting skills. However, I was able to execute my techniques to win both finals matches," added Manglona, who grew up on Tinian.

Manglona, an Airman currently serving in the United States Air Force stationed at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona, will compete in two separate tournaments this month.

He will first see action in the Arizona State Brazilian Ji-jitsu Federation Classic on Feb. 21 and 22 at the Phoenix College and then compete in the North American Grappling Association tournament in late February.

"I currently train at MMA LAB in Glendale, Arizona under black belters Royce Gracie and John Crouch, who has helped many top level Ultimate Fighting Championship fighters," said Manglona.

Manglona, who ended a three-year hiatus in fighting, said he plans to be more active in competition whether in mixed martial arts or Jiu-Jitsu. The former Gorilla Warfare MMA welterweight champion said he wants to fight once he returns to Saipan.

"I am also looking for any opportunities to come back home to compete in MMA as much as possible," said Manglona, who trains at Cuki Alvarez's Trench Tech Gym when h on Saipan.

"I want to inspire people of the Marianas to chase their dreams, that's my intention why I share my experiences," added Manglona, who holds a 3-1 MMA record with all of his three wins by submission.

He last fought in Pacific Xtreme Combat 27 where he lost to Guam's Ryan Bigler (9-3, with 3 knockouts and 5 by submission) on Oct. 29, 2011.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	33	16	.673	—
Brooklyn	19	28	.404	13
Boston	17	30	.362	15
Philadelphia	11	39	.220	22½
New York	10	39	.204	23

Southeast Division

Atlanta	40	9	.816	—
Washington	31	18	.633	9
Charlotte	21	27	.438	18½
Miami	21	27	.438	18½
Orlando	15	36	.294	26

Central Division

Chicago	30	19	.612	—
Cleveland	30	20	.600	½
Milwaukee	26	22	.542	3½
Detroit	19	30	.388	11
Indiana	17	32	.347	13

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Memphis	36	12	.750	—
Houston	33	15	.688	3
Dallas	33	17	.660	4
San Antonio	30	18	.625	6
New Orleans	26	22	.542	10

Northwest Division

Portland	33	16	.673	—
Oklahoma City	24	24	.500	8½
Denver	19	30	.388	14
Utah	17	31	.354	15½
Minnesota	8	40	.167	24½

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	38	8	.826	—
L.A. Clippers	33	16	.673	6½
Phoenix	28	22	.560	12
Sacramento	17	30	.362	21½
L.A. Lakers	13	35	.271	26

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

12 reset PBTs in 200m IM

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Swim Club and Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan swimmers capped the 2014-2015 SSC Pentathlon Swim Meet by marking 12 personal best times in the 200m individual medley.

Tsunami Saipan's Nanaka Watanabe led the list of swimmers who earned PBTs in the final event of the tournament held last month at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool. Completing the list were Nanaka's sister Aikawa and teammates Sophia Gauran, Juhn Tenorio, Anthony Camacho-Deleon Guerrero, Nelson Batallnes, Jhota Yoshino, Kyona Rivera, and Katherine Illahi and SSC's Jinnosuke Suzuki, Rintaro Miyawaki, Taiyo Akimaru, and Taiga Sato.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Saipan Swim Club's Rintaro Miyawaki does the breaststroke part of the 200m individual medley in last month's 2014-2015 SSC Pentathlon Swim Meet at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

Nanaka raced in the girls 9 to 10 division and clocked in 3:24.15 to surpass her old PBT of 3:33.41. She finished ahead of SSC's Coume Kaga (3:39.12), Jinie Thompson (4:05.80) and Ayaka Sato (4:49.40) and fellow Tsunami Saipan swimmers Natsuki Nagata (4:04.84) and Ayumi Obligacion (4:45.13).

In the girls 11 to 12, Gauran and Aika submitted 3:05.06 and 3:19.99, respectively to eclipse their previous PBTs of 3:11.32 and 3:27.46. Miku Tammy also of Tsunami Saipan ruled the event with her 2:50.96, but missed beating her PBT (2:46.38), while SSC's Conatsu Kaga (3:22.24), Jin Ju Thompson (3:35.46), and Jasmin Frink (4:13.48) did the timed race for the first time.

In the girls 13 to 14, Kyona Rivera timed in at 3:13.36 to chop off more than seven seconds from her old PBT (3:26.45), while Illahi had over an 11-minute drop with her 3:49.63 (from 4:01.79). Angel De Jesus and Daime River, who were in the 15 to 16 and over 17 age group, were on the same heat and logged 3:00.37 (from PBT of 2:56.60) and 3:30.59 (3:29.51).

In the boys division, Jinnosuke Suzuki topped the 9 to 10 age group with his PBT of 3:10.08, more than 12 seconds from his old mark (3:22.60). Runner-up Tenorio also set a PBT (3:12.42 from 3:23.17), while Camacho-Deleon Guerrero, who placed third in the race, had the same feat with his 3:14.95 (from 3:49.66). Akimaru was the fourth swimmer in the division to mark a PBT (4:01.65).

In the 11 to 12 division, Taiga Sato placed second behind Lennosuke Suzuki (2:57.92), but his 3:03.08 was way better than his old PBT (3:12.14). Battalones and Yoshino also earned PBTs after timing in at 3:14.08 and 3:30.07, respectively.

Other swimmers who raced in the final event of the meet were SSC's Rinto Takahashi (3:15.91), R.J. Pierce (3:37.11), Christian Villacrusis (2:51.54), and David Boyer (3:23.65) and Tsunami Saipan's Kaito Yanai (2:26.13).

Meek & Mighty Swim Saturday

Meanwhile, the 9th SSC Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim will be held this Saturday in the waters off Pacific Islands Club.

Registration will start at 7am, while the race will kick off at 8am. Entry fee is only $10 with the first 30 to sign up getting one PIC waterpark pass each. Participants can choose from the three courses: 1K, 3K, and 5K.

For more information, contact saipanswimclub@gmail.com.

Veterans clinch first finals berth

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Veterans swept Local Motion in their best-of-three semis series to bag the first finals berth in the 2014-2015 Saipan Rocball League at the Marianas High School last week.

The Veterans juiced out Local Motion in Game 1, 56-28, before pulling off a 47-41 overtime victory in Game 2 to wrap up the short semis series and march into the finals first.

In Game 1, the Veterans dominated Local Motion, winning all four sets, 14-8, 16-7, 13-3, and 13-10.

In Game 2, it was a different story, as Local Motion came out more prepared and gave the Vetarans a tougher time. Local Motion drew first blood, prevailing in the first set, 15-8, before the Vetarans fought back in the second, 13-2.

The Veterans made it two in a row with a 14-7 triumph in the third set, but failed to secure another juiced-out win as it dropped the fourth set 6-13. After regulation, the Veterans were ahead, 41-27, but since they lost the fourth set, Local Motion remained in contention. Rocball rules give the leading team the win only if it also tops the fourth set. If not, the game will go into overtime with the leading team needing to get only one victory and the trailing squad having to prevail twice.

The Veterans went on to end Local Motion's finals hopes with a 6-4 triumph in the extra frame.

With the sweep, the Veterans now have to wait for the victor of the other semis pairing between the top-ranked Benchwarmers and the Teachers.

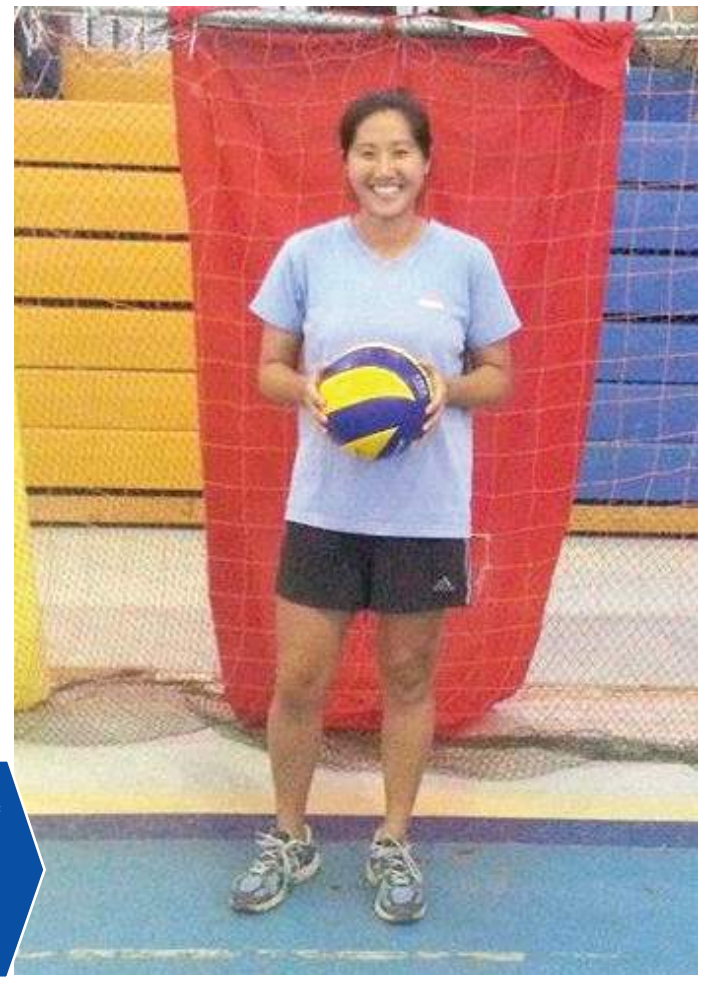
The other Final Four duel is tied, 1-1, with the Teachers taking Game 1, 54-30 and the Benchwarmers battling back in Game 2, 56-49.

The Teachers, who notched the last semis berth after eliminating Oba Squirt, handed the Benchwarmers their first loss in the league after ruling Game 1 of Final Four showdown, 13-5, 14-10, 14-12, 13-3.

Despite missing a perfect record, the Benchwarmers quickly regrouped and avoided the Teachers' upset axe with the big win in Game 2. The Benchwarmers were all business in the first two sets, 12-0, 12-11, before dropping the third, 9-14. In the fourth set, the opposing teams battled back and forth with the Benchwarmers showing poise in the end, escaping with a 14-10 victory to even up the series.

The deciding Game 3 was scheduled yesterday, but results of the match were unavailable at press time.

In related news, the Teachers' Kathy Winkfield made history in Saipan Rocball after scoring a goal off a serve in last week's semis matches. According to Saipan Rocball creator James Feger, Winkfield was the first player on the island to earn that feat.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Kathy Winkfield scored a goal off a serve in the Teachers' semis match against the Benchwarmers last week in the 2014-2015 Saipan Rocball League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Brewers ground Jets for win No. 3

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Pat Alepuyo made a bases-clearing double in the seventh inning and the defending champion GSM Brewers waltzed to a 17-1 win over the Jets in Monday night's game in the 2015 Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco M. "Tan Ko" Palacios ballfield.

Alepuyo, with two outs and the bases loaded, drove Mike Muna's pitch to deep right field to bring in Vince Cepeda, Nokki Saralu, and Lancaster Secharmidal. He went 3-for-5 with two runs scored on two doubles with a total of five RBIs.

Alepuyo also had an RBI double in the top of the first and an RBI single earlier in the batting order in the seventh.

The Brewers, enjoying an 8-1 lead after six complete innings, made a 9-run barrage in the top of the seventh and closer Roy Celis came in the bottom half and shut down the Jets to seal their third straight win in as many games.

Celis made short work of the three batters he faced one by one striking out Jess Mesa, Joseph Attao, and Chris George to end the game and earn the win.

John Mafnas started for the Brewers and pitched four innings where he allowed the Jets to one run on three hits with one walk and three strikeouts. Daniel Agulto pitched two shutout innings in relief and holding their opponents to one hit while fanning two.

Left fielder Perry Tudela, who had a lead-off walk in the bottom of the third, scored the Jets' lone run when he reached home on a Manny Sablan throwing error.

Jesse Brel also batted 3-for-5 with one run and two RBIs, while Secharmidal went perfect at the plate, 3-for-3, with four runs and a double. Cepeda, 2-for-4, scored twice, an RBI and a triple.

Jets center fielder Dave Matagolai went 2-for-3 with a pair of singles.

The Falcons (2-0) were playing the North Starz (1-2) at press time while the Fielders (1-2) take on the Yankees (1-1) tomorrow at 7pm at the Tan Ko ballfield.

Warriors ride hot first-half stretch to beat Kings, 121-96

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CNMI U18 tops Japanese team

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI drew first blood in its two exhibition games against Japan Soccer College after the host's U18 national team eked out a 2-1 victory in last Tuesday's friendly at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Sean Perez rose to the occasion for the home team, drilling the pair of goals, including a difficult one in the second half that gave the Blue Ayuyus the lead and fired up spectators fighting the cold conditions in the game played on a chilly night.

Perez's second goal came off Scott Kim's assist, as the latter kicked the ball forward from way past the right midfield.

See CNMI on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The CNMI U18 National Team's Sean Perez, third from left, steps in the play to receive a pass, while teammate Joel Fruit, right, looks on during the second half of their exhibition game against Japan Soccer College last Tuesday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Manglona is California State grappling champ

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Former Tinian resident Keli Manglona won two gold medals to become the California State champion in the recently concluded California State Grappling Championships held at the Consumnes River College in Parkway, South Sacramento.

Manglona, who goes by the fight name Ruckus before but changed it to Maga'lahi as a tribute to his Chamorro cultural roots, first topped the 195-lb weight class

See MANGLONA on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Saipan-born fighter Keli Manglona celebrates at the podium after clinching two medals in the recently concluded California State Grappling Championships held at the Consumnes River College in Parkway, South Sacramento.

Enrico formally signs with Division 2 school

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

Last December Enrico Del Rosario verbally committed to the Alderson Broaddus Battlers of the United States' NCAA Division 2. The 17-year-old MP United soccer player signed a National Letter of Intent yesterday, formally pledging to attend the institution for four years with an athletic scholarship.

Alderson Broaddus University, located in Philippi, West Virginia, is a member of the United States National Collegiate Athletic Association and will officially receive Del Rosario's Letter of Intent today, on National Signing Day.

The Mount Carmel School senior student said he is both relieved and humbled to have signed the letter of intent. "After nine years of playing hard until I graduate, it is a great feeling," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Del Rosario has been a part of many local and national soccer tournaments and was recently licensed as a soccer coach and is currently training MP United's U15 girls soccer team.

Del Rosario started playing soccer when he was just 8 years old. In a previous interview with this reporter, the athlete said, "Soccer has been good to me over the years and I'm capitalizing on that opportunity to get a good education."

He added, "I chose this school because the football program is amazing. I had a great conversation with the coach and it's very exciting. From the fields, players, and staff, it's all great."

He plans to pursue a degree in sports science while playing U.S. NCAA soccer.

His father, Norman Del Rosario, said he is proud of his son's accomplishment. "He worked so hard for it. It is proof that if you have a dream you have to go for it no matter how hard it is, because are the end of the day it is possible," he said.

THOMAS MANGLONA II
MP United soccer player and Mount Carmel School senior Enrico Del Rosario inks his National Letter of Intent declaring Alderson Broaddus University as his chosen school.